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# THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF PLAINCHANT

A Practical Guide for Students by  
GEORGE OLDROYD, D.Mus.  
(Lond.) F.T.C.L. and CHARLES W.  
PEARCE, M.A., Mus.D., F.T.C.L.

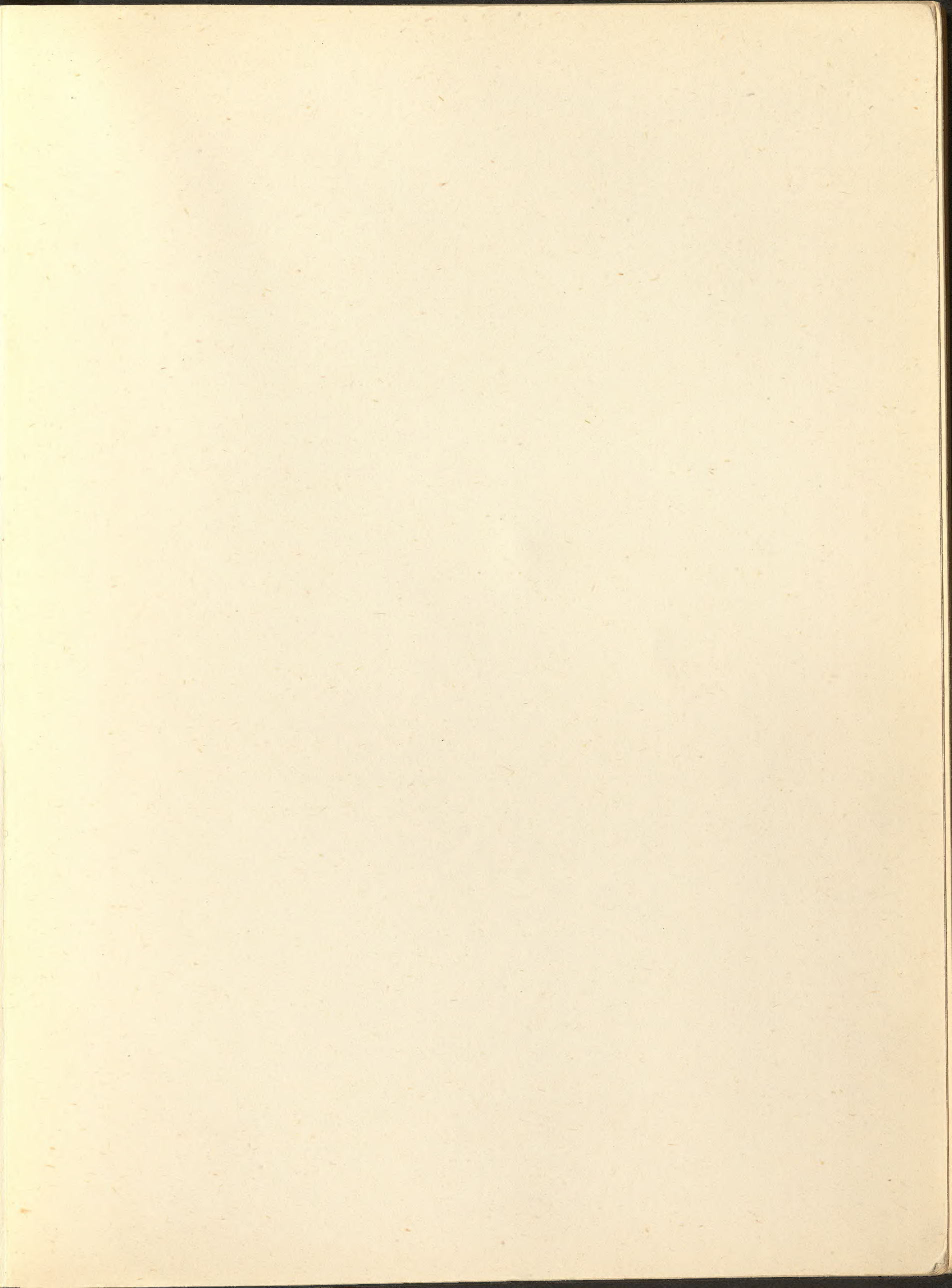
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THE ACCOMPANIMENT  
OF PLAINCHANT







*Dedicated to Sir Richard R. Terry*

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GEORGE OLDROYD, D.Mus. (Lond.), F.T.C.L.

and

CHARLES W. PEARCE, M.A., Mus.D., F.T.C.L.

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DEDICATED  
TO  
SIR RICHARD R. TERRY, Mus.D.

IN APPRECIATION OF HIS UNIQUE WORK  
AND INFLUENCE AS ORGANIST AND  
DIRECTOR OF THE MUSIC  
AT WESTMINSTER  
CATHEDRAL

. . .







## FOREWORD

**A**LL ANCIENT CHURCH MUSIC was originally intended to be without harmonized accompaniment of any kind. It was all *song*, i.e. it was always sung to words. Plainsong differs from modern Church Music in at least two important respects: tonality and rhythm.

The perfection of an instrumental accompaniment to Plainsong should consist in its strict agreement with the essential characteristics of the vocal melody it is meant to support. Small in volume, simple in texture, it should never be allowed to hamper the freedom of the natural rhythm of the sung words. In perfect sympathy with the vocal delivery of the sacred text, it should be suggestive of much more than it is able to express.

From the close of the sixteenth century until the last two decades of the nineteenth, Plainsong was practically a lost art. Everywhere it was rendered by voices and accompanied by the organ in a rough uncultivated manner: its melodies modernized by the insertion of accidentals entirely foreign to the modes in which the music was originally cast; its rhythm shackled by vain attempts to force it into measured bars of equal length.

These unhappy conditions are revealed in the examples given in the Appendix on page 55, some of which are from the pens of musicians who were eminent in their day. In the present volume every effort has been made to lay down definite principles of harmonization which every organist who accompanies Plainsong ought to have literally at his fingers' ends whilst playing. Such knowledge will enable him to become fully acquainted with the harmonic and even contrapuntal possibilities of every ecclesiastical mode by being placed in a position to determine exactly how and where he can introduce such things as the optional 'B moll,' discords, both essential and unessential, chord changes, etc., without unduly diverting a hearer's attention from the proper tonality and rhythm of the ancient melody he is accompanying.

We conclude with a reference to 'The Memorandum of the Winchester Diocesan Church Music Committee' (appearing as Appendix ii, in the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Music in Worship, appointed 1922).

In this Memorandum is stated that after two years' work, the Winchester Diocesan Church Music Committee has reached agreement on nine points, number two of which is: 'The Study of Plainsong should be part of the general training of all church musicians, whether it is likely to be used in the churches where they serve or not.'

GEORGE OLDROYD  
C. W. PEARCE

Lady Day, 1924



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# THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF PLAINCHANT



## Chapter I

Notation, Staff, Clefs, Method of Reading, Accidentals.

NOTATION

## ERRATA

Page 6. In footnote (1) *for* 'modes,' *read* 'later modes,' *and for* 'Æolian' *read* 'Ionian.' *After* 'not greatly used' *insert* 'And, although Mode VI (see page 14) and the melodic range of Mode IV (see page 12) are each identical with the modern scale of C major, yet in neither case is Doh (C) the Final, nor Soh (G) the Dominant.'

Page 12. In the N.B. par. at top of page, *after* 'melodic flow' *read* 'For the same reason Te (B) is neither used as a Final, nor as the extreme note of a Plagal Modal range.'

Page 25. In the quotation from the Bach 'Canzona,' end of first bar, *read*:





## THREE-NOTE GROUPS:



torculus



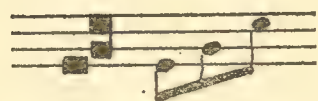
porrectus



climacus. Used in descending passages.



scandicus. The first note receives stress.



salicus. The second note receives stress.

There are also groups consisting of four, five, six, seven notes—made by combining various of the smaller groups.

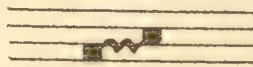
THE PRESSUS. This is a group formed by tying or binding two notes of the same pitch, sung to the same syllable. It may occur at the beginning or in the middle of a larger group.



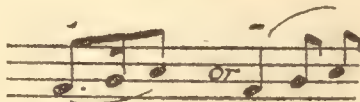
N.B.—The first of the two notes of the same pitch receives the stress, irrespective of its position in the whole group. Thus (a) and (b) would be rendered



THE QUILISMA. This is a note written ♪, occurring usually between two notes a third apart, and forming a group.

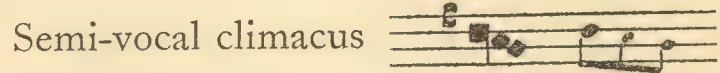
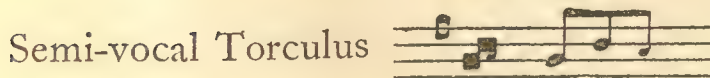


The stress is always on the note preceding the quilisma, which note is also somewhat lengthened. The quilisma is sung very lightly. The group may be represented in two ways, both of which are only approximately correct.



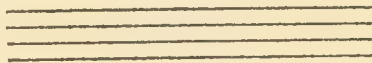


LIQUESCENT GROUPS. There are occasions when the very quiet rendering of the last note of a group is indicated in the notation—that particular note appearing in miniature form. Four such groups are :



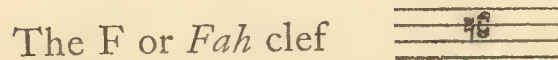
## THE STAFF

The staff always employed in Plainchant consisted of four lines:



## THE CLEFS

There are two clefs used in Plainchant, namely,



They are movable and they indicate the position of *Doh* and *Fah* respectively. Sometimes at points in the progress of a melody, the position of the clef is altered—placed upon a higher or lower line. This is to avoid the use of leger lines.

## METHOD OF READING

The best way of reading Plainchant notation is by the application of the Tonic Sol-fa method. This system also facilitates the transposition of melodies for the person performing the accompaniment.

## ACCIDENTALS

The only accidentals used in Plainchant notation are the flat (*b*) and the natural (*n*) signs. Only one degree of the natural scale is ever inflected—the seventh degree or the note *B*. The appearance of this flattened seventh-degree as a melody note will lead, later on, to the consideration of the use of it, in combination with others, in the accompaniment. The influence of the flat extends only to the notes belonging to the word in which it occurs.



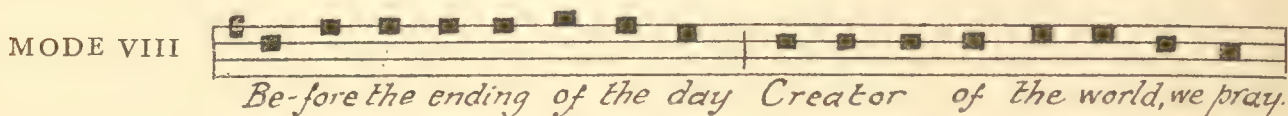
## Chapter II

### Types of Plainchant Melody, Transcription into Modern Notation

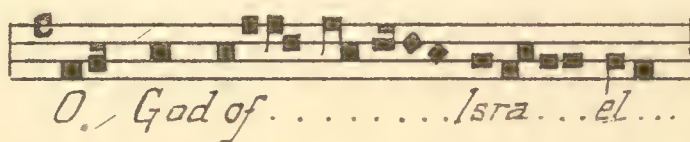
#### TYPES OF PLAINCHANT MELODY

The two types of Plainchant Melody are known as (i) *Syllabic*, and (ii) *Melismatic or Neumatic*.

(i) **SYLLABIC MELODIES.** In these, each syllable of the text is sung to a single note (or occasional syllables to a small group of notes).



(ii) **MELISMATIC OR NEUMATIC MELODIES.** In these, single syllables are often sung to more or less elaborate groups of notes represented by neums. The beauty of such melodies cannot be realized unless rendered with proper understanding of their rhythm.<sup>1</sup>



This notation seems to be vested with a kind of 'mystery': and it is perhaps interesting to find, even nowadays, in the 'articles of agreement' between master and pupil, that 'the pupil is to be trained in the art and *mystery* of music.'<sup>2</sup>

#### TRANSCRIPTION INTO MODERN NOTATION

The difficulty of reading from strange clefs and old neumatic notation is well known. To obviate this difficulty, melodies are often presented in modern notation on the five-line staff and with the  $\text{C}$  clef. It is now generally agreed for the following reasons that the unit note should be the quaver.

(a) that the quaver is suggestive of the light, fluent method of rendering plainchant, in contrast to the heavy, slow idea suggested by the minim.

(b) that quavers are easily grouped—the advantage of which is shown in the transcription of elaborate melodies and also in any written accompaniment. The 'minim' arrangement  $\text{d d d}$  is done away with. (See Appendix, page 55.)

(c) that in the accompaniment, the representation of sustained chords can be more conveniently written—two, three, four quavers can be written over chords represented by crotchet, dotted crotchet, and minim respectively, and so on.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XI, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from 'Articles of Agreement' in possession of Dr. C. W. Pearce.



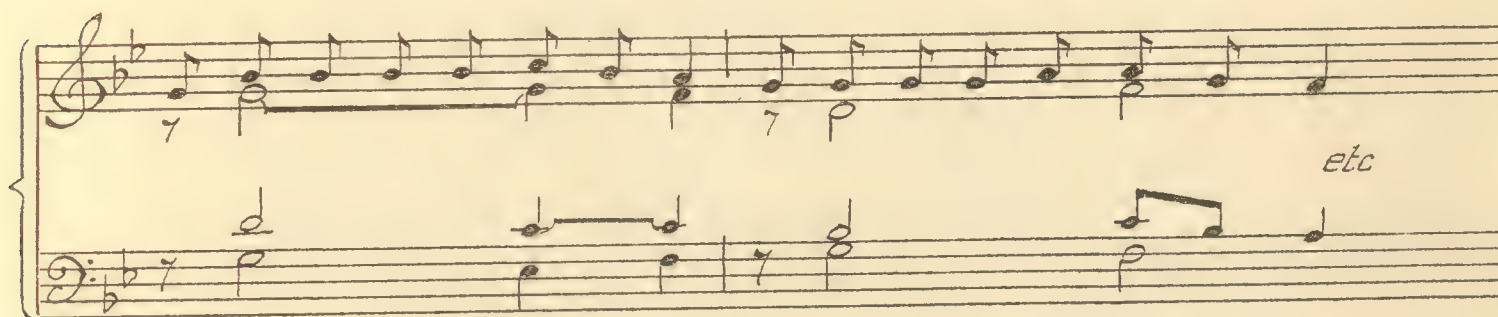
## TRANSCRIPTION OF HYMN MELODIES

In some recently published hymn books the *minim* is still adopted as the unit note when Plainchant hymn melodies are given with modern notation. As a *minim beat* and a *quaver beat* may be of the same duration (which means that whether a hymn tune be written with either minim or quaver notes as the unit, it can be performed at the same *speed*), the matter is simply one of appropriateness of notation. Most modern hymn tunes are in strict metrical rhythm, and it matters little what the unit note may be; but Plainchant hymn melodies are in free rhythm, and their accompaniment is not so much a change of chord with each melody note (as generally holds in metrical hymn tunes) as a change of chord suggested by the sense of the text. This suggests that the quaver unit is at least as appropriate as the minim, and there is little doubt but that the use of the minim as unit has led to a dreary, heavy, and unattractive way of rendering these pliable, free-rhythm tunes.

## INADEQUACY OF MODERN NOTATION

It must be remembered, however, that as the elasticity of Plainchant cannot be truly represented in modern notation—it is an advantage to be able to sing from the original notation. But the printing of these old melodies in the original was probably found detrimental to the popular spread of Plainchant, and so their transcription into modern notation with the quaver as unit is strongly commended. Under the guidance of a skilled choirmaster, the rendering of even elaborate melodies, though read from modern notation, need not lack the intended freedom and fluency.

Example.—Transcription of the melody in Mode viii on page 4 (transposed a tone lower with an accompaniment).





## Chapter III

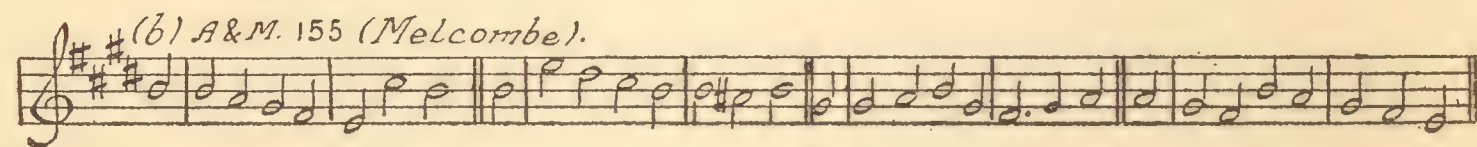
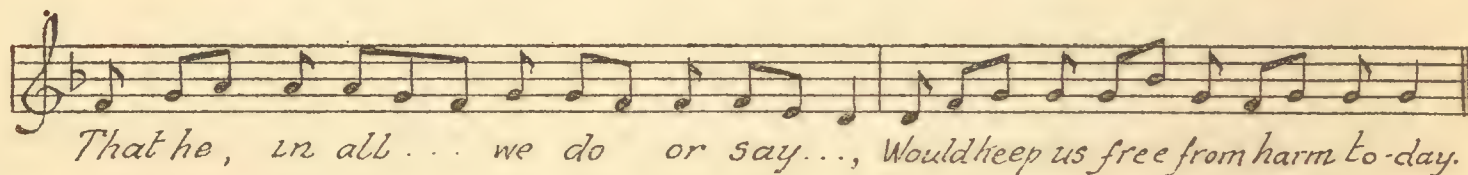
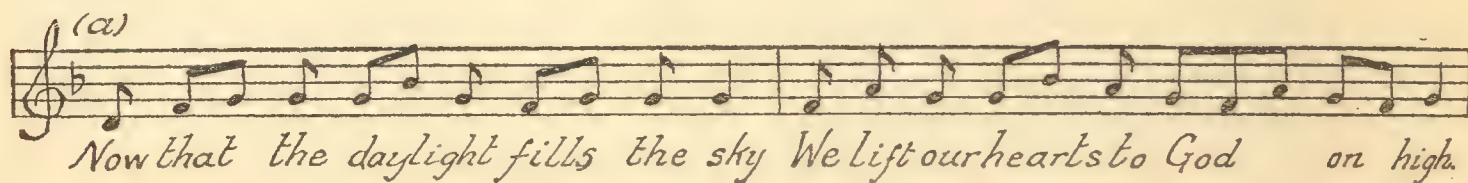
### Plainchant and Modern Hymn-Melody contrasted

#### THE BASIS OF PLAINCHANT MELODIES

is the modes, and in order to accompany Plainchant melodies appropriately, a thorough study of the modes is essential.

Plainchant melodies were composed centuries before that special and fixed order of tones and semitones, which characterizes our major and minor scales, was known.<sup>1</sup> And these old melodies, therefore, have characteristics—have an atmosphere—quite different from those of melodies based on the modern scale. If the following hymn melodies be played or sung, differences in tonal character will be evident at once.

#### Mode II



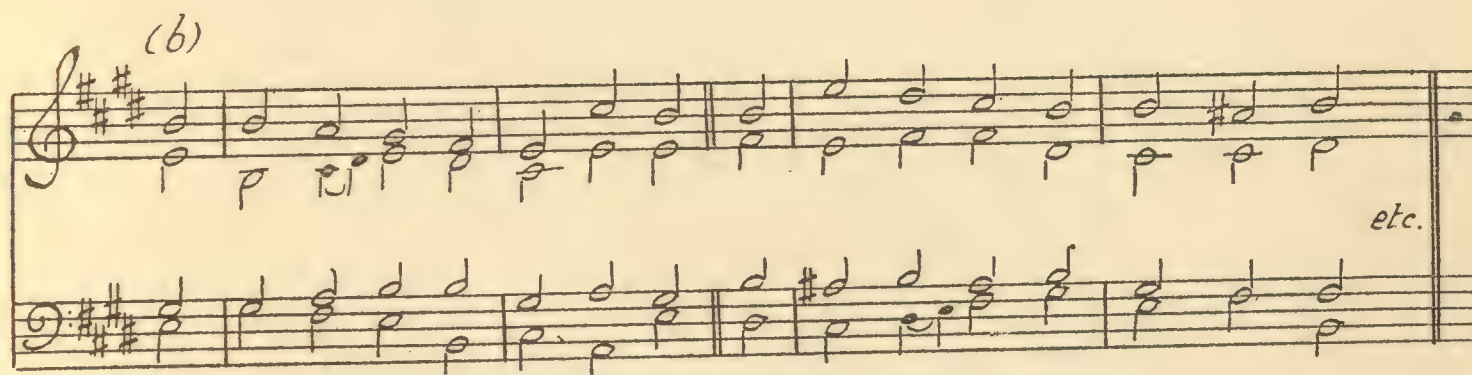
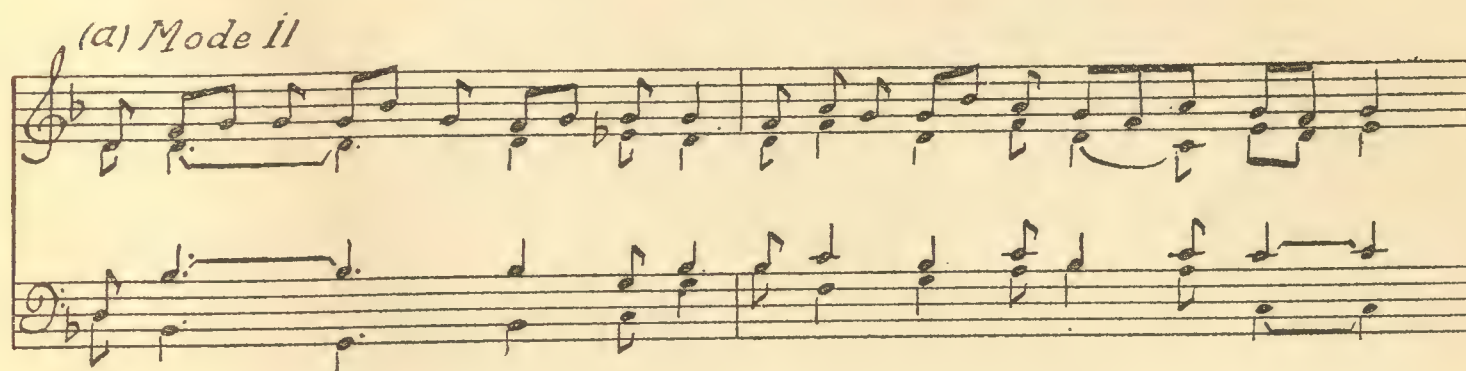
#### OBSERVATIONS

- (i) The melody (a) cannot be described as being in a *key*. It ends not on the Tonic (or Doh) of the Signature, but on *Ray*.
- (ii) The rhythm of (a) is free, and not that of any fixed metrical type as the tune (b), with its four minims in each bar.
- (iii) The melody (a) does not *modulate* in the sense that tune (b) modulates at the end of the second strain.
- (iv) The melody (a) often has two or more notes to a syllable. Melody (b) has one note to a syllable.

<sup>1</sup> One of the modes, the Æolian, is identical with the major scale of to-day, but strangely enough, it was not greatly used.



The difference in character between these melodies is perhaps even more marked when appropriate harmonies are added. Thus:

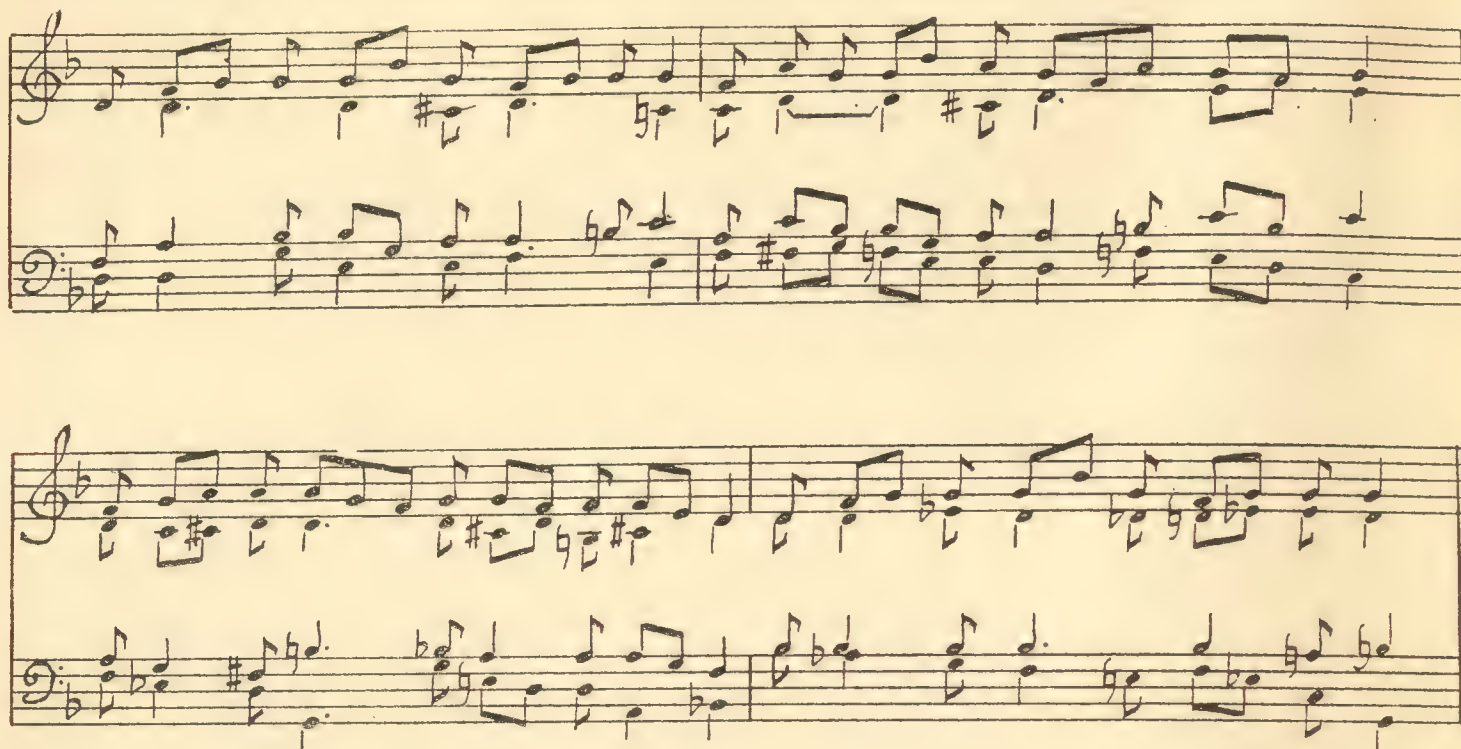


#### OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) Melody (a) is not harmonized by a separate chord for each melody-note: it is harmonized rather in groups of notes.
- (ii) Melody (b) is harmonized note by note.
- (iii) It could not be said that the harmony in (a) suggests any modern *Key*. Nor can there result a satisfactory effect from endeavouring to harmonize it as though in a *Key*. By doing so, the peculiar atmosphere and character which inherently it possesses is destroyed, as the following example serves to illustrate.



<sup>1</sup> Melody (*a*) harmonized by chords based on our modern scale system.



#### OBSERVATIONS.

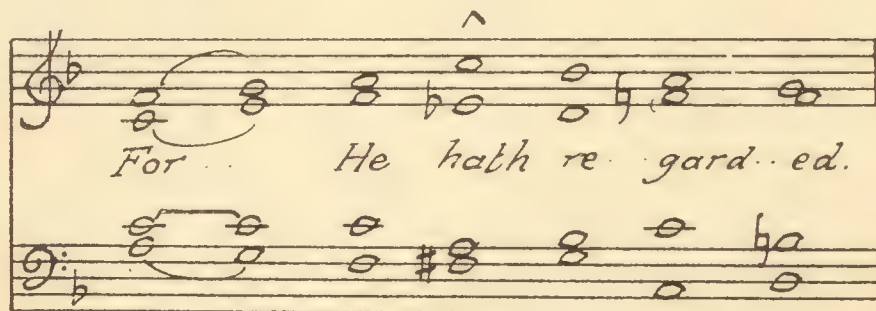
- (i) There is no key-sense established, although the harmony is associated with the modern scale or key system.
- (ii) The restful atmosphere of the previous harmonization is absent. This modern harmonization is unnatural.

A full appreciation of the foregoing observations is important, for above is shown the absurdity of a melody founded upon the modes, harmonized by chords founded upon a different scale system. (See footnote.)

No longer would there be such impropriety as the following phrase exhibits.

[Reference to the author of this published harmonization is withheld. The phrase given is typical of the rest of the same work.]

MAGNIFICAT. Tone VI (Regius).



It may be of interest at this point for the student to refer to the Appendix, where are shown examples of the harmonization of Plainchant melodies by musicians of the nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> The following harmonization of melody (*a*) is by the authors, who have intentionally used chords to illustrate their object. But, let it be said, examples in abundance could be reproduced from printed copies, of harmonic impropriety and rhythmic distortion of most destructive quality—such as to make it difficult even to recognize the original Plainchant tunes.



## Chapter IV

### The Accompaniment of Plainchant, The Modes

The *appropriate* accompaniment of Plainchant is a matter concerning which many players and writers have confused ideas—or no ideas at all. Some allow the use of a certain harmony which others reject: liberties are taken by some in which others would not indulge. This conflict of opinion and practice has been, and is, disconcerting to the earnest organist who holds Plainchant in high respect, and whose aim is to accompany it in appropriate style.

To a certain degree the matter is one of taste. It is certainly one of *reflection*—turning the mind backwards from the music of to-day and endeavouring to apply decorously a knowledge of modern tone-combination to melodies of bygone ages whose originators conceived them quite apart from harmony, and who based them on modes or scales quite different from modern scales.

The suggestions within these pages are the outcome of thought and practical experience, and are put forth in the hope that they may help organists towards a uniform and acceptable style of Plainchant accompaniment. It is not claimed that examples are given of every possible chord or contrapuntal combination that may be used; but if the spirit of the examples be maintained there will result a treatment free from gross errors of taste.

#### THE MODES.

For all practical purposes, there are only eight modes which need be studied.

Each mode (or scale) consists of eight white keyboard notes in succession, beginning from one of the white notes on the piano. The modes may be arranged in four pairs, each pair having a common finishing note termed the *Final* (which corresponds, in a way, to our Tonic).

N.B.—Besides all the white notes above mentioned, the note B flat is used in melodies of all the modes; therefore at the outset it may be included in these scale forms. It should be borne in mind that the following examples represent the modes at the *natural pitch*, so that B flat is the seventh degree flattened.

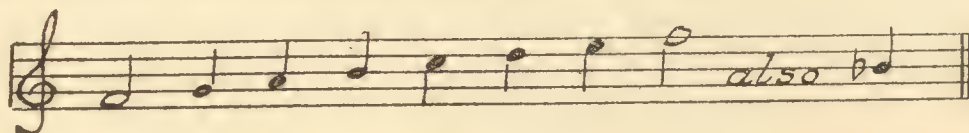
Modes *i* and *ii* have D (or Ray) for their Final. Thus:



Modes *iii* and *iv* have E (or Me) for their Final. Thus:

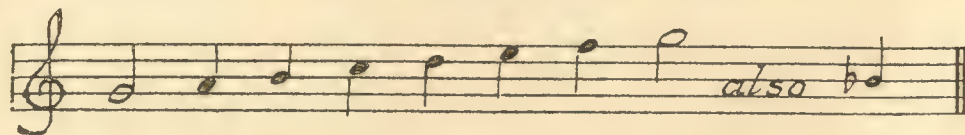


Modes *v* and *vi* have F (or Fah) for their Final. Thus:





Modes *vii* and *viii* have G (or Soh) for their Final. Thus:



These modes may be transposed; then, the preservation of the tones and semitones in their several orders involves the use of sharps and flats. No Plainchant melody written at the natural pitch has any note inflected other than the B, which occurs as B flat (contradicted by B natural).

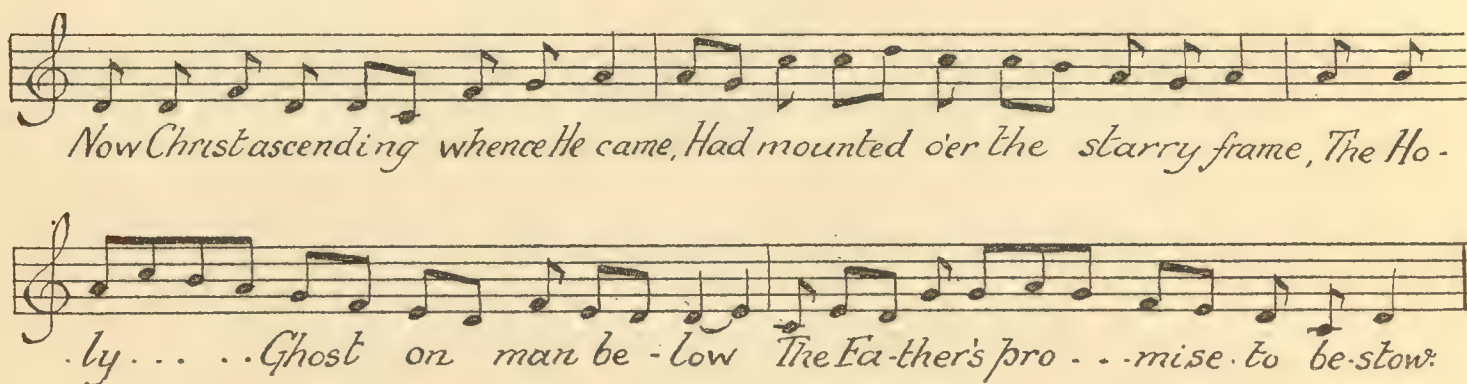
It is best to refer to the modes by number and not by name; and it is advisable to think of their Finals, Dominants, etc., in Tonic Sol-fa terms.

N.B.—Modes *i*, *iii*, *v*, *vii* are termed *Authentic Modes*.

Modes *ii*, *iv*, *vi*, *viii* are their respective *Plagal Modes*.

### EXAMPLES.

#### *Melody in Mode I*

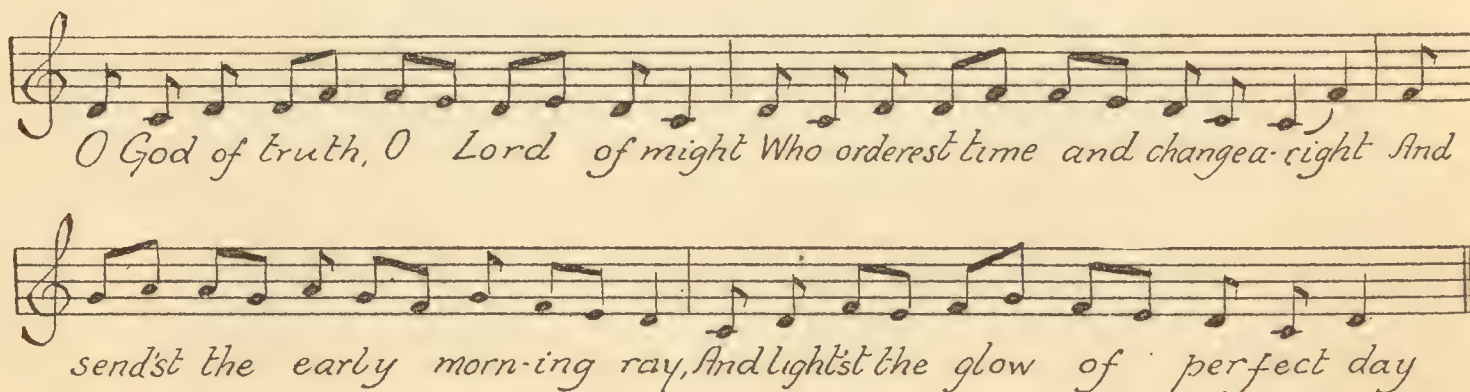


### OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) *The range* is about an octave from the Final Ray—occasionally exceeding.
- (ii) Besides the Final Ray being of frequent occurrence, the note Lah (A) is prominent. It is called the *Dominant*, because its presence generally dominates melodies in Mode *i*.

This Dominant happens to be the fifth note above the final just as our modern Dominant is a fifth above its Tonic. But the position of the modal Dominant is not such a fixed one as the modern-scale Dominant. It is not *always* the fifth note above the Final, but as a rule it is so.

#### *Melody in Mode II*









N.B.—Doh, the Dominant, is a *sixth* above the Final, not a fifth. If the Dominant of Mode *iii* were reckoned as a *fifth* above the Final, it would be Te (B), but this note was never regarded as being sufficiently stable for a dominant in any mode; for it is the only note or degree of the scale that is ever inflected, being flattened a semitone at convenience, no doubt to avoid the feeling of the tritone (F to B) and to soften the melodic flow.

*Melody in Mode IV*

0 Father, that we ask be done, Thro' Je-sus Christ, thine on-ly Son:

Who, with the Ho-ly Ghost and Thee, Shall live and reign e--ter-nal-ly.

OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) The *range* falls within an octave from *Doh* (C) (the Dominant of Mode *iii*).
- (ii) The *Final* is Me, as in Mode *iii*.
- (iii) The Dominant note appears to be Lah (A), which is regarded usually as the Dominant of Mode *iv*. Note that it is a third below the Dominant of its Authentic Mode *iii*.

The relationship between Mode *iii* and its respective Plagal Mode *iv* may be shown, as follows:

Mode *iii* Final Range Dom<sup>6</sup>

Mode *iv* Final Range Dom<sup>5</sup>

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF MODE IV. Another example of a Melody in Mode *iv*.

Cre-a-tor of the stars of night, Thy people's ev-er-last-ing Light,

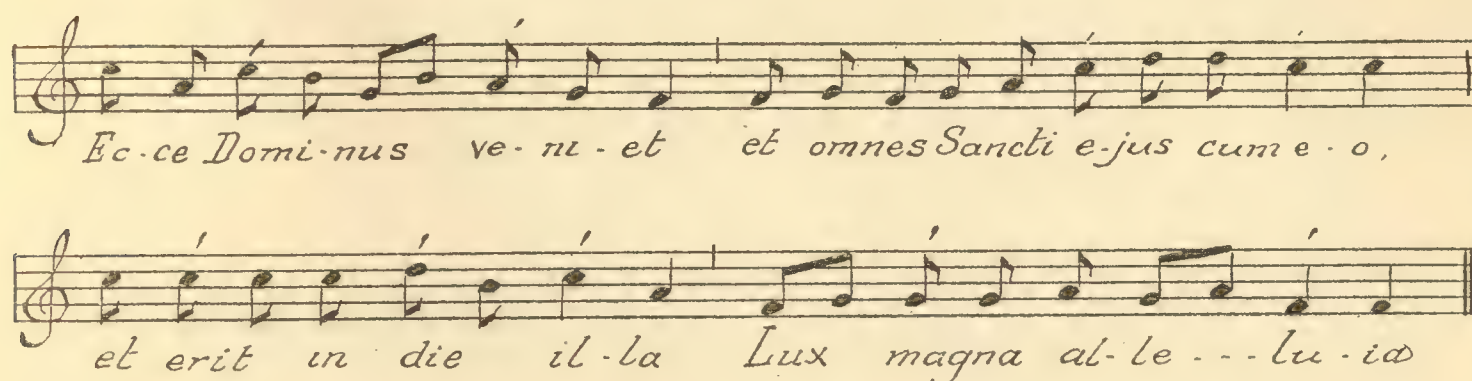
Je--su, Redeemer save us all And hear thy servants when they call



In this melody, and in many others, the note *Soh* is more prominent than the generally acclaimed Dominant *Lah*. A moment's thought will recall that *Soh* is the third below the *original* Dominant of Mode *iii*—that is *Te*—and so has some claim as a dominant of Mode *iv*. This may account for the fact that there are many melodies (in Mode *iv*) in which *Soh* has greater prominence than *Lah*.

N.B.—In Psalmody, the Dominant of Mode *iv* is always *Lah*. The dominant of a mode is usually the reciting note of the Psalm Verses.

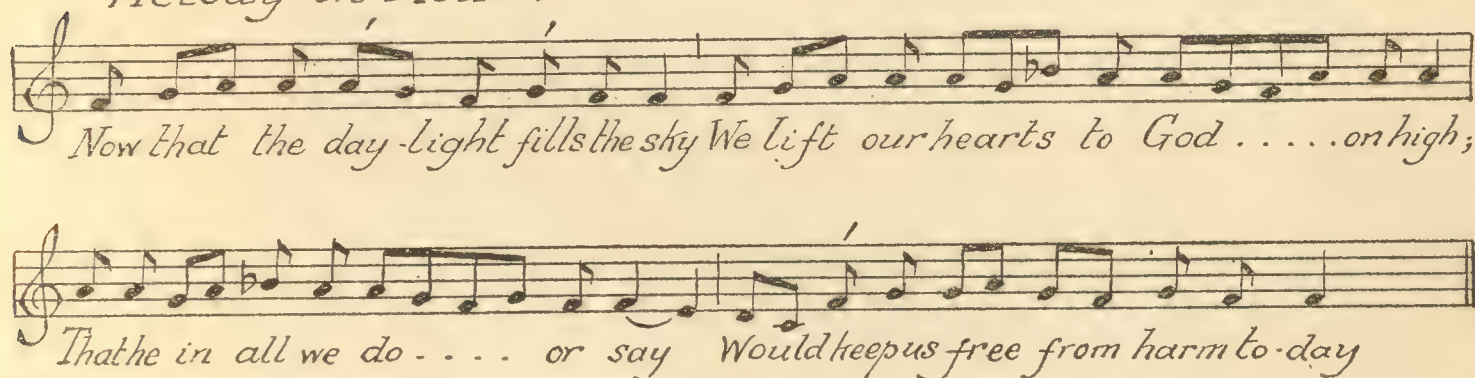
*Melody in Mode V*



OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) The *range* is about an octave from *Fah* (F).
- (ii) Its *Final* is *Fah*.
- (iii) The dominant note is *Doh*, which is regarded as the Dominant of Mode *v*.

*Melody in Mode VI*

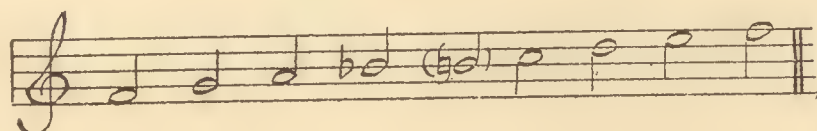


OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) The *range* is about an octave from *Doh* (C).
- (ii) Its *Final* is *Fah* (F) (as in its respective Authentic Mode *v*).
- (iii) The dominant note is *Lah* (A) (the third below the Dominant of Mode *v*), and is regarded as the Dominant of Mode *v*.

N.B.—In melodies of both Mode *v* and Mode *vi*, the B flat *frequently* occurs.

The presence of B flat in the above melody whose *Final* is *Fah*, tends to create a tonality identical with the modern major scale, thus:

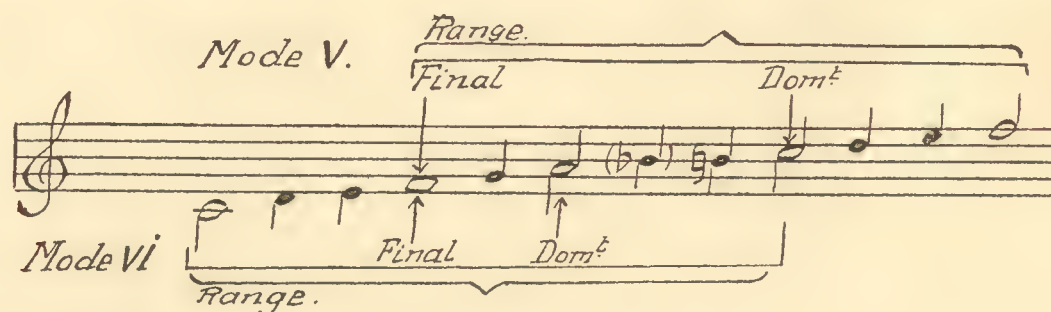




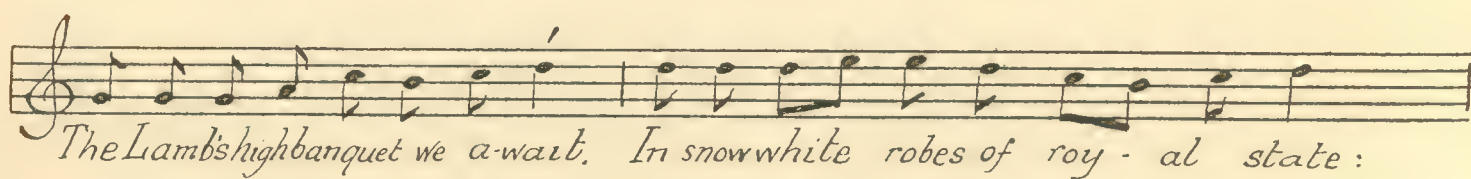
And so it happens that many melodies of Modes *v* and *vi* sound as though in our major scale.

[As has been said already, the B flat may occur in melodies of all modes.]

The relationship between Mode *v* and its Plagal Mode *vi*, may be represented as follows:



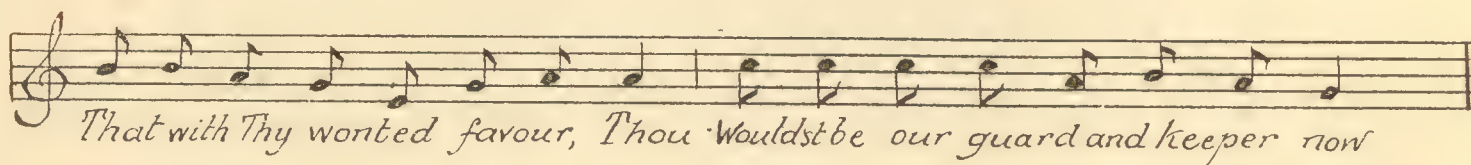
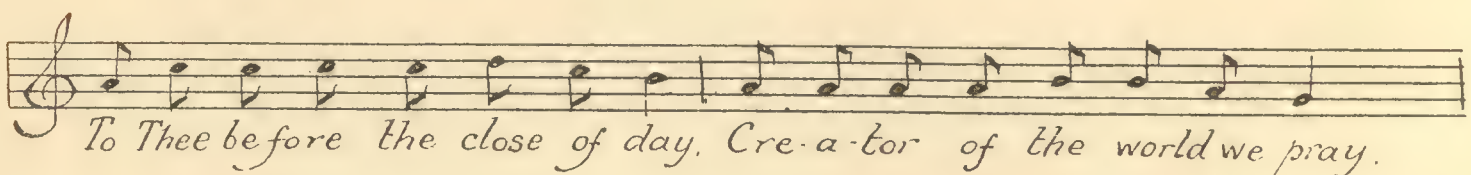
### Melody in Mode VII



#### OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) The *range* is about an octave from *Soh* (G).
- (ii) The *Final* is *Soh*.
- (iii) The dominant note is *Ray*, which note is regarded as the Dominant of Mode *vii*.

### Melody in Mode VIII



#### OBSERVATIONS.

- (i) The *range* is about an octave above *Ray* (the dominant of Mode *vii*).
  - (ii) The *Final* is *Soh* (as in Mode *vii*).
  - (iii) The dominant note is *Doh*, and this is regarded as the Dominant of Mode *viii*.
- N.B.—The dominant note, a third below that of the Dominant of the Authentic Mode *vii*, would be *Te* (B): but for the reason already stated, this note is replaced by the stable note *Doh* as dominant of Mode *viii*.

It is obvious that the above melody in Mode *viii* could be harmonized as though in the modern key of G major; in fact, it is often thus wrongly treated.



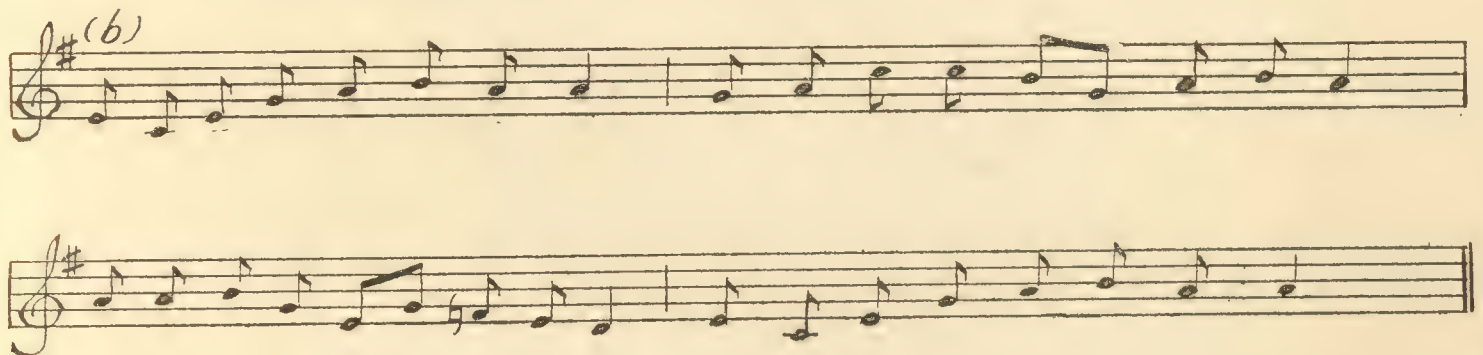
## Chapter V

Additional Notes on the Modes, Misleading Finals, A matter of signature,  
Characteristics of the Modes: how best realized.

**MISLEADING FINALS.** Melodies are sometimes written so that they appear, judging from the last note indicating the Final of the mode, to belong to some mode other than those already mentioned. For example, the following melody ends on Lah.



But not one of the eight modes spoken of has Lah for the Final. The fact is that the above melody is in Mode *ii*, and has been transposed a fifth higher than its normal pitch *without any alteration of 'Key' signature*. To be in strict order and to show that the above melody is in Mode *ii*, there should be F sharp in the Signature thus:



Now, it is *clearly* in Mode *ii*. Note that in the third strain the F (which is the seventh degree of the scale *flattened*—corresponding to B flat of the natural scale) is here marked natural. In the presentation of this melody as at (a) with no sharp in the signature, it was not, of course, necessary to show the F as a flattened seventh. Although this saves marking the F in contradiction of the Key signature, yet it raises a point of importance, for it is easy to see how this is apt to confuse inexperienced accompanists. The point is that when melodies appear at a transposed pitch there should be a corresponding alteration of the Key signature, so that the mode of the melody is quite clear.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MODES—HOW BEST REALIZED

The several modes, exhibited in melody, have each more or less a characteristic 'atmosphere,' and it is well to understand how these characteristic 'atmospheres' arise, and how they should be appreciated.



In this particular matter, time and experience are the best teachers. By constantly hearing melodies in the modes, the ear becomes thoroughly acquainted with their characteristics. But apart from this, a careful examination of a number of melodies in each mode should prove helpful towards the end in view. Such an examination might be conducted as follows:

Consider the Cadence notes of each phrase—also the notes upon which the chief stresses fall within each phrase, bearing in mind the Final or Anchor note of the particular mode, for all notes are relative to the Final of the mode. This will show the notes which appear to be generally prominent throughout each series of melodies. Such prominent notes may conveniently be termed '*pivots*' of the melody, or melodic pivots.

Examination of five melodies (chosen at random) in Mode *v* showed the melodic pivots to be mainly:

Doh, Fah, Lah [Final of Mode being Fah].

A similar test of five melodies in Mode *vii* showed the melodic pivots to be:

Ray, Soh, Te, Lah [Final of Mode being Soh].

This indeed suggests that the two sets of melodies have distinct characteristics.

The examination of five melodies in Mode *i* showed Me only three times as a cadence note.

Five melodies in Mode *iii* showed Me as a cadence note not less than eleven times.

The preponderance of Me in Mode *iii* melodies as compared with those in Mode *i*, suggests that these two sets of melodies possess distinct characteristics, especially when we remember that the Finals of the Modes *i* and *iii* are different.



## Chapter VI

The Harmonic Basis of the Appropriate Accompaniment of Plainchant,  
Guiding Principle, Available Harmony.

The question whether Plainchant should or should not be accompanied in performance is not discussed in this book. It may be sufficient to state that Plainchant is accompanied in places of worship where the music is under the control of musicians of eminence and authority.

Long before any system of harmony was regarded as a series of perpendicularly built 'chords,' the art of weaving melodies together was practised. Melodies thus intermingled produced combinations of notes which we term harmony; but such chords were not arrived at in accordance with any arbitrary system or academic rules of harmony. They were the result of parts moving together horizontally on paper. The works of composers of the Tudor period afford examples of harmony so produced—that is, *contrapuntally* produced—and which no rules of perpendicular harmony can explain. Thus:

(1) From the 'The Fair Young Virgin,' Wm. Byrd (Dr. Fellowes' Edition of English Madrigals).

The musical score for 'The Fair Young Virgin' by William Byrd is presented in four staves. The top staff is labeled 'Treble' and 'Alto'. The second staff is labeled 'Tenor I' and 'Tenor II'. The third staff is labeled 'Bass'. The lyrics are: 'is like the rose un-tain . . . . . ted etc.' for the first two staves, 'is like the rose un . . . tainted, un . . . tainted. etc.' for the third staff, and 'is like . . . the rose un . . . tain . . . . . ted.' for the fourth staff. The music is in a single system with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C).

Also from 'Ave Verum Corpus.' (Edited by R. R. Terry.)

Wm. Byrd.

The musical score for 'Ave Verum Corpus' by William Byrd is presented in three staves. The top staff is labeled 'Treble' and 'Alto'. The bottom staff is labeled 'Tenor' and 'Bass'. The music is in a single system with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C). A chord marked with a circled cross symbol (⊕) is indicated at the end of the first staff.

The chords marked ⊕ in the above examples are the harmonic result of the art of counterpoint as practised in those days.

*What then, is the harmonic basis of Plainchant accompaniment?* It is that of our modern harmony perpendicularly considered, but restricted to diatonic chords as suggested by the notes forming the modes, which, it will be remembered, are those of the scale of C major, with the addition of B flat. It has been asserted by some theorists that only common chords and their first inversions should be used. Others have gone further and consented to their second inversions, also to the use of diatonic sevenths and their inversions. Higher discords are more or less generally avoided, but it was the fashion years ago (and the fashion has not yet died out) to use chromatic chords very liberally, according to the examples on page 8. Must the solution be left to individual taste entirely? Is it not possible to draw the line at some point and so arrive at a more or less uniform outlook and practice?

Surely, as the modes themselves do not admit of any chromatically altered notes (except the B flat), neither should accompanying chords involve such notes. Further, such chromatically altered notes are not called for in order to effect modulation, for there is no modulation as we understand it in Plainchant melody. It would appear conclusive that accompaniment should be restricted to diatonic harmony (including the B flat as a diatonic note).

### THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The Guiding Principle may be thus clearly defined: 'Use diatonic harmony, including B flat as a diatonic note of every mode, and avoid the use of even diatonic harmony that may savour of modern feeling.'

An explanation of the term 'modern feeling' will be made later. The following are the harmonies available according to the above principle.

(i) All common chords in their root position (except the diminished triad on B). All first inversions of common chords. (Note the special consideration of the first inversion of the diminished triad, page 19).

All second inversions of common chords used in accordance with the accepted rules of 'Six-four' progression. (Note the suggestions on page 19.)

(ii) Harmonies resulting from treatment of melody notes as passing notes, accented passing notes, suspensions, and other decorative notes. (Concerning decorative notes, *see* pages 23 to 26).

N.B.—Consideration of the availability of the seventh and higher discords *as essential notes of chords* occurs on page 27.

### ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE USE OF THE ABOVE HARMONIES

(I) (A) *Simple diatonic chords* in root position and first inversion.

'HYMN, AVE MARIS STELLA.' Mode *i* (a simple accompaniment).

The musical score is for the hymn 'Ave Maris Stella' in Mode *i*. It features a single melodic line on a treble clef staff and a harmonic accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are written below the notes: 'A - ve Maris Stella, Dei Mater alma, Atque semper Virgo Felix Cæli porta.' The accompaniment consists of simple diatonic chords in root position and first inversion. Four specific chords are labeled with arrows and letters: (a) for the first measure, (b) for the second measure, (b) for the fifth measure, and (c) for the eighth measure. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the mode is *i* (Dorian).



## OBSERVATIONS.

At (a) the use of the 5-6.

(b) the use of the 4-3.

(c) the use of the second inversion.

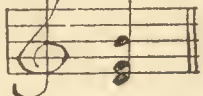
(B) *Second inversions* may be used with advantage so long as they do not create *modern cadential effect*—that is so long as they do not involve or suggest a *modern key sense*.

## EXAMPLES OF PASSING OR TRANSITORY SECOND INVERSIONS.

N.B.—The second inversions above occur over a *standing bass*, and the student is advised to restrict his use of them accordingly.

In the following quotations the second inversions fall on the accent and add emphasis; but they are not commended, the alternative versions being preferable, serving the same purpose.

## CONSIDERATION OF THE FIRST INVERSION OF THE DIMINISHED TRIAD.

The diminished triad in its first inversion  is usually regarded as

an available chord for the harmonization of Plainchant. It contains the harmonic use of the tritone, and experience leads to the conclusion that the presence of the tritone militates against the mellifluous character of Plainchant harmonization. A study of Plainchant melodies shows how the tritone was avoided in melodic contour (no doubt one purpose of the use of B flat)—and to the experienced ear the tritonic effect in the diminished triad, even in its first inversion, is not pleasant in Plainchant. There are those to whom its use is quite acceptable, but nevertheless, the student is advised to avoid it. The following examples with alternatives may serve to illustrate the matter:

*Mode I* (Alternative)

*Te cuncti resonent Christi adum cho-ri*

N.B.—It should be borne in mind that there is no such thing as a leading-note, and that the note B is not fettered by any modern rules of progression.

*Mode VII (transposed)* (Alternative)

*To Christ our King we sing at last*

It will be noticed that in the above examples the seventh degree occurs as the melody note. The following example is frequently heard:

*Tone V. i. Ps. XCVII. v. 9.* Alternative

*For thou Lord art higher than all that are in the earth*

*Thou art far above all gods*

*far above all gods all gods.*

or

*far above all gods.*

(II) *Harmonies resulting from the treatment of decorative melody notes as passing notes, accented passing notes, suspensions.*

The following illustrations will serve to show the use of passing notes, accented passing notes producing the figurings 4-3, 7-6, 9-8, 6-5, 5-6, etc.



- (i) Note the 5-6 (of frequent occurrence in Plainchant accompaniment) and 4-3.

(i) *From Te Deum Mode III* *Harmonized by Sir R.R. Terry*

quos pre - ti - o - so sangui - ne red a . . . . . misti

5 - 6 4 - 3

- (ii) Note the 7-6 and its effectiveness.

(ii) *From Magnificat - Mode VI* *G.O.*

For He that is mighty hath magnified me

7 - 6

- (iii) Note the 6-5.

(iii) *Mode V* *R. R. Terry*

Ex - ul - tavit spiri - tus me - us.

5 - 6 6 - 5

- (iv) The 9-8 often occurs over a standing bass.

*Mode VI* *From Agnus Dei (Missa de Angelis) R. R. Terry.*

A - - - - - gnus De - - - - - i.

⊕

(v) The 9-8 also occurs simultaneously with the 4-3 or 2-3, over a standing bass. Occurring thus, these double suspensions do not clash and arrest the attention of the ear as they would if the outside parts moved together.

*Mode III* *From Te Deum. Harmonized by R.R. Terry.*

Venerandum tuum re . . . rum Tu ad dexteram Dei se . . . des.

$\phi$   $\frac{9}{4}$   $\frac{8}{3}$   $\phi$   $\frac{9}{2}$   $\frac{8}{3}$

N.B.—Attention is called to the importance of the phrase ‘over a standing bass.’ In the harmonization of Plainchant, much that is harmonically appropriate ‘over a standing bass’ is not so under other circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

(vi) In the following example the ninth, appearing in an inner part, is coincident with the moving bass.

It must be borne in mind that harmony serves the purpose of *background* to Plainchant melody—throws the melody into relief—and that it should never be allowed to assert itself as *foreground* in the slightest degree. Should it be allowed to do so, then, although the harmonic effect may be enriched, nevertheless it usurps the prerogative of the melody. The appreciation of this fact is increased by experience.

*Mode VII* *alternative.*

Al-le-lu-ia, Alle-lu-ia

In the above example, the ninth being coincident with the moving bass, although the effect of the suspension in an inner part is less forceful than when in the melody, yet the ear is attracted by it—harmony becomes foreground for a moment. It is better avoided as in the alternative harmonization.

(vii) Double and triple suspensions also should not be used coincident with the moving bass, although quite appropriate ‘over a standing bass’ as already shown.

In aiming at emphasizing the meaning of the text by means of the accompaniment, care should be taken lest a somewhat modern harmonic effect creeps in which, though not inartistic as music, may be remote from the simple and restricted atmosphere of Plainchant. The following example is not commended:

<sup>1</sup> Further reference to this is made in the ‘consideration of the availability of the seventh and higher discords as chords of accompaniment,’ page 27, etc.



*From 'Dies Irae'*

All be - - fore the throne it bringeth.

9 8  
6 5  
4 3

When at the final cadence (or any cadence), there is a repeated note, the accent being on the first, the use of a suspension is most essential, as the following illustration shows:

(a) (b)

Al - le - lu - ia

4 3

How tame the version (b) is, compared with (a).

The following is an example of the force of accented passing notes:

*From 'Asperges me' Harmonized by R.R. Terry.*

Se - cun - - dum etc

HARMONIES RESULTING FROM THE TREATMENT OF MELODY NOTES AS *decorative notes*.

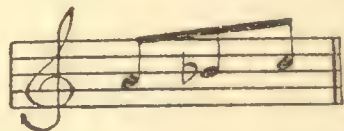
*The Treatment of Discordant Notes arising from Melodic Decoration or Elaboration.*

The following example exhibits a point of much importance, namely, the treatment of discordant notes arising from melodic elaboration over a sustaining harmony:

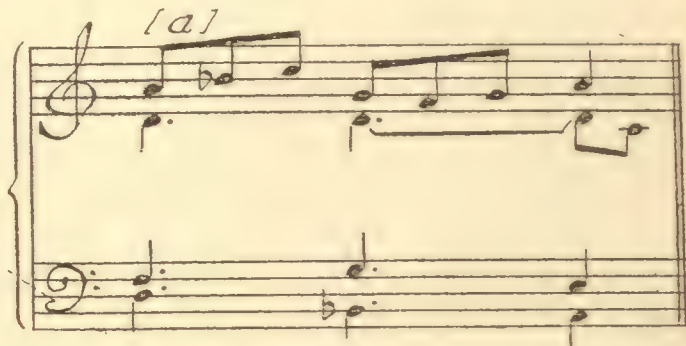
*From 'Vidi aquam' Harmonized by Sir R.R. Terry*

saeculum miseri - cor - - di - am e - jas

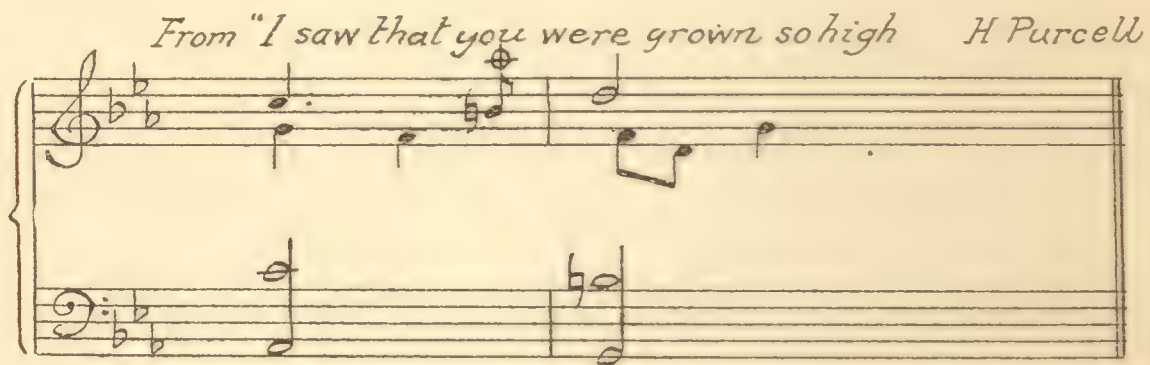
Between the two marks  $\oplus - - \oplus$  the melody *turns* upon two pivot-notes—B flat and F. There is one main accent on 'cor' falling on B flat. Both A and G are notes of decoration, and both these notes are quitted by leap, though finally the second A moves by step. These decorative notes revolve upon or about their pivot-notes quite regardless of the harmony that may be supporting and to which they may be quite foreign. Being independent of the harmony, they remain free. If such a decorative note *happens to form a seventh*, this places no restriction upon its movement. Thus, for instance:



B flat and C may be regarded as decorative notes about A, which may be called the *pivot* note. No matter what harmony may be chosen to support the first note of the group, the decorative notes are free irrespective of what chords (or discords) they may have produced. Thus:



This treatment is akin to that of many examples that are to be found in Purcell, Handel, and Bach. Thus:







The above examples are very interesting: the one from Bach affording a fascinating instance of the peculiar freedom which such decorative notes enjoyed (even at a period when a melody and its harmonic support were conceived simultaneously).

To speak further of the Bach example. The G natural in the melody at ⊕ is a decorative note: it is an unessential note of the existing harmony; yet it is free in its movement and leaps to another unessential note, the appoggiatura D, against text-book laws of harmony. Viewed melodically, the passage



hinges on the note D. D is the *pivot* or anchor note.

#### A DIGRESSION.

Perhaps it is possible to account for the curious examples already mentioned on page 17, from the works of William Byrd, as similar clashings to the above. Thus referring to the example 'The Fair Young Virgin.'

In the alto part of these two bars, A is the pivot note of the phrase, and the B flat may be regarded as a decorative note returning to A.

In the Tenor part, C may be regarded as the pivot note of the phrase, and the B natural as a decorative note returning to C. But the B flat and B natural happen to coincide. The circumstances affecting the movement of these two parts respectively are *purely melodic*, quite independent of, and not subservient to, any particular basic harmonic idea.

This digression may be pardoned if only because that, although the *harmonic* treatment of Plainchant melodies is being studied, yet it should always be remembered that the harmony must be subservient to the melody; and that on no account must the imaginative and charming decorations of melody be ruined in effect by attempts to harmonize every note of them by a separate chord.

The following examples show the freedom of discordant decorative notes in Plainchant. (Again let it be remembered that notes of a melody become discordant solely at the will of the one harmonizing the melody.)

*From Hymn - Mode 1 Harmonized by C. W. Pearce.*

Te Jo - seph cele - brent agmina

*Tone 1 8 G. O*

And their hand presseth me sore

Such notes as the above marked  $\oplus$  are aptly called 'notes échappées,' by Monsieur E. Gastoué, an eminent French writer on Plainchant, and many examples of them are to be found in his treatise, *Harmonization du Chant Gregorien*.



## Chapter VII

### Consideration of the Availability of the Seventh and Higher Discords as Chords of Accompaniment.

The following quotation is taken (by permission) from *Some Remarks on Plainsong Accompaniment*, by Sir R. R. Terry:

'The inartistic person considers he has dismissed Plainsong when he terms it monotony. Monotonous! Yes; so is the sough of the wind in the trees; so is the boom of the surf on the shore; and so do both stir our soul to its uttermost depths. Where the commonplace mind sees only monotony, the artist sees the mightiness of a great repose. And here we have the keynote of Plainsong—repose, perpetual repose, and calm. Modern music may be likened to a fertile plain, teeming with life and movement; its hues ever changing with the seasons; its streams and cascades now dancing in the sunlight, now foaming under the lash of winter storms. No artist can resist its lure. But is he less penetrated by the unchanging repose of the everlasting hills? So to me it seems impossible that any musician steeped in the modern idiom can fail to respond to the strong calm repose of Plainsong. The keynote of modern music is life, energy, eagerness; a divine discontent ever seeking fresh worlds to conquer. The essence of Plainsong is dignity, aloofness. Modern music is active and intimate; Plainsong contemplative and impersonal.

'And this brings us to the concrete proposition of Plainsong accompaniment. It must reflect the spirit of Plainsong—repose, repose, and ever repose. In modern composition one must keep the listener on tiptoe until the final cadence. One must stimulate the interest and keep up the suspense by postponing one's climax. Too many full closes mean dullness, and repetition of the same cadence spells banality. The very opposite is the case in Plainsong. The objective of the accompanist, so far from avoiding repetition, is to make constant use of it. He must seek as many points of repose on the common chord as he can. He must avoid, as far as possible, "stimulating the interest" in the sense in which that term is used in modern composition.'

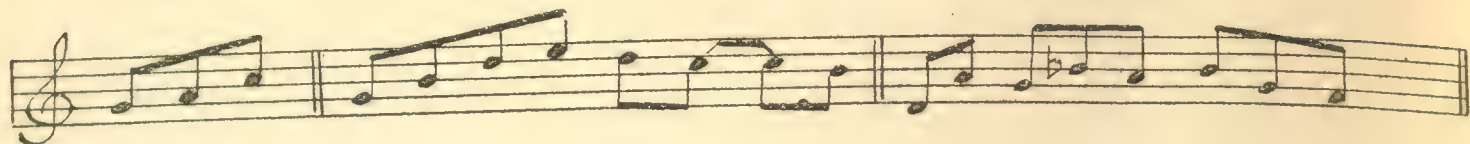
Coming from the pen of one whose practical experience of Plainsong is unique, the above lines are of inestimable value. The quotation might be restated in *précis* as follows:

In harmonizing Plainsong—

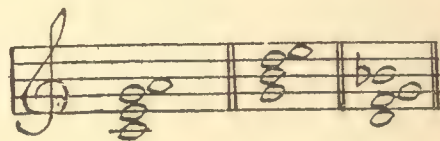
- (1) Do not disturb the atmosphere of repose.
- (2) Do not create any feeling of suspense.
- (3) Do not seek to 'stimulate the interest.'
- (4) Do not indulge in harmony which is anti-modal in feeling and suggestive of key sense.

The above observations solve the question of the availability of discords, such as chords of the seventh.

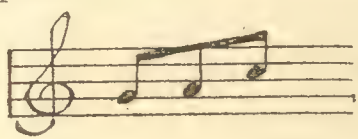
In neumatic Plainchant such melodic groupings as



are of frequent occurrence. These groupings appear to suggest the following discords respectively:



which might seem to imply that these discords may be legitimately used as *chords* of accompaniment. Such a conclusion, however, is rather a hasty one. It is true that the above groupings suggest the *harmonies* represented by the respective chords shown; but is it not too much to conclude that these melodic figurations imply discordant harmonic support in the accompaniment? For instance, is there not a real and vital

difference between the effect of  accompanied in the two following ways? viz.:



The first (a) is reposeful: the discordant note A is soon passed over; its momentary effect vanishes.

The second (b) creates suspense: the discordant note is sustained.

The resulting harmony in both cases is identical. The appreciation of this subtle difference is of great importance, for it probes to the root of the matter under discussion. It dictates that discords, such as chords of the seventh, should not be used as *chords* in the accompaniment; this does not mean that their *harmony* should be avoided. This difference should be clearly realized.

It has already been stated that 'in the harmonization of Plainchant, much that is harmonically appropriate *over a standing bass* is not so under other circumstances.' Thus, over a standing bass, a discordant note such as the seventh may appear either in the melody or as a passing note in an inner part, without arousing the feeling of suspense or disturbing repose. This is illustrated by the following examples:



From "Vidi aquam" Mode III. Harmonized by R.R. Terry.

A - - - qua i - - - sta - - - etc

From "Asperges me" Mode IV Harmonized by R.R. Terry

Secundum magnam miseri - cordi - am tu - am

N.B.—'Standing bass' does not imply a long pedal note. It may be quite short as at the cadence of the first example above.

In the following example the discordant seventh appears as a suspension. The *chord* of the seventh is not used.

From "Dies Irae" (b)

Leave me not to repro-ba-tion. etc.

The version (b) shows the harmonization using the *chord of the seventh*; and it might be urged that it makes little difference. There may be little difference to the modern ear accustomed to frequent discord, nevertheless the notes of the chord of the seventh sounded simultaneously, are suggestive in a degree of modern key sense. Perhaps the following example shows this more strongly:

From "Magnificat" Tone VI

The lowliness of his hand-maiden.

The effect of the chord of the seventh is possibly least in evidence in such an example as the following. But it cannot be denied that the presence of the *seventh* simultaneously with the plain triad, adds a colouring of anti-modal effect. Reiteration of the passage serves to impress this. Avoid using it, for the plain triad is out of the range of criticism.

*Mode I* *alternative.*

*Cœlum dedic-ti limi-tem.* *etc*

The appropriate occurrences of the seventh are during melodic figuration over a supporting triad harmony, or over a standing bass, and as a passing note in an inner part over a standing bass.

#### EXAMPLES FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.

The following examples contain chords of the seventh either harmonically conceived, or arrived at by contrapuntal means. No doubt to many at first their effect will appeal and seem acceptable.

The student is asked to consider them carefully, and it is suggested that *finally* he will decide that those marked  $\oplus$  should be dispensed with and not imitated, for one or more of the reasons stated on page 27; and that other instances such as those marked O, are appropriate.

It will be noticed that not one instance marked  $\oplus$  shows the seventh over a standing bass.

(i) *Tone II*

*And they have spoken against me with false tongues. They compass me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause*

(ii) *Tone III*

*And to be the glory of thy people Is-ra-el*



*Tone VI*

And hath exalt-ed the humble and meek.

*Tone IV*

There is none that doeth good, no not me.

*Tone VI*

The lowliness of his hand-maid-en.

*Dies Irae. Mode I.*

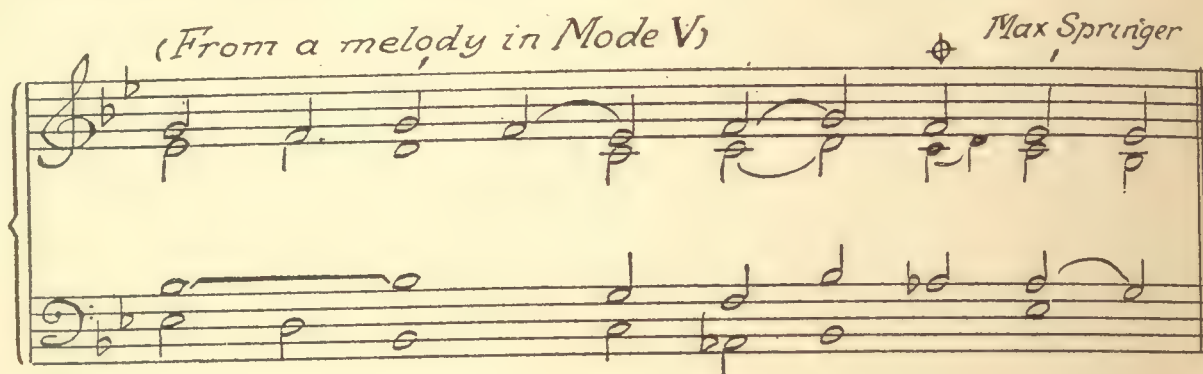
Day of wrath! and doom impend-ing. etc.

## Chapter VIII

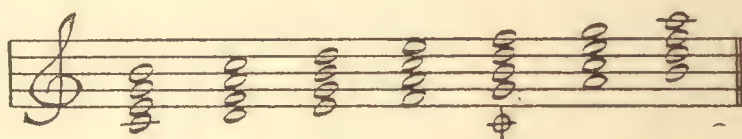
## Consideration of the 'Dominant Seventh'

On page 18 it has been laid down as a guiding principle that any use of diatonic harmony which may savour of modern feeling should be avoided.

The following example is one which savours of such feeling, caused by the chord at  $\oplus$ , which chord (in modern language) is termed a 'dominant seventh.'



Referring to the diatonic sevenths on each degree of the scale, the *seventh on the fifth degree* has a major third, perfect fifth, minor seventh; it is the only diatonic seventh containing those intervals, and is known in modern harmony as the *dominant seventh*.

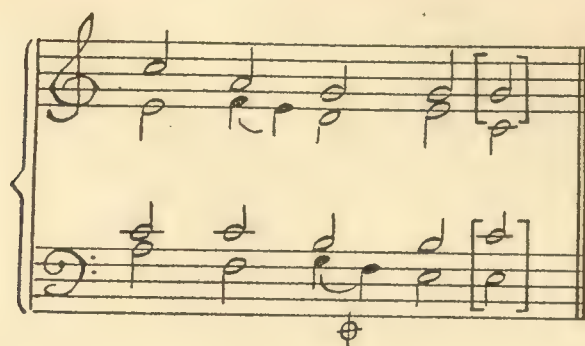


The dominant seventh is of very common occurrence at the final cadence in modern hymn tunes and compositions in our major and minor keys. To many, its insinuating effect in Plainchant accompaniment (as above illustrated) is decidedly contrary to the *plain archaic* feeling of the other chords already considered as in keeping with the tonal atmosphere of Plainchant. Besides this insinuating effect, there is no doubt that the above example arouses modern key-feeling. A simple 'dominant' triad is quite sufficient for such cadential purposes. Furthermore, in this particular instance, the A flat, being the flattened seventh degree in the mode, is not essential; its presence does not in any way serve the characteristic atmosphere of the mode.

Max Springer, from whose book on *Plainchant Accompaniment* the above example is taken, remarks that the dominant seventh should only be used 'sparingly.' But such a phrase is vague, and lacks definite instruction. If the chord is acceptable at all in Plainchant, why should its use be vaguely restricted? It suggests that Plainchant accompaniment really does not admit of the *effect* of the dominant seventh.

The only case we can think of in which this chord could be used with reasonable propriety, is in the following position and progression:

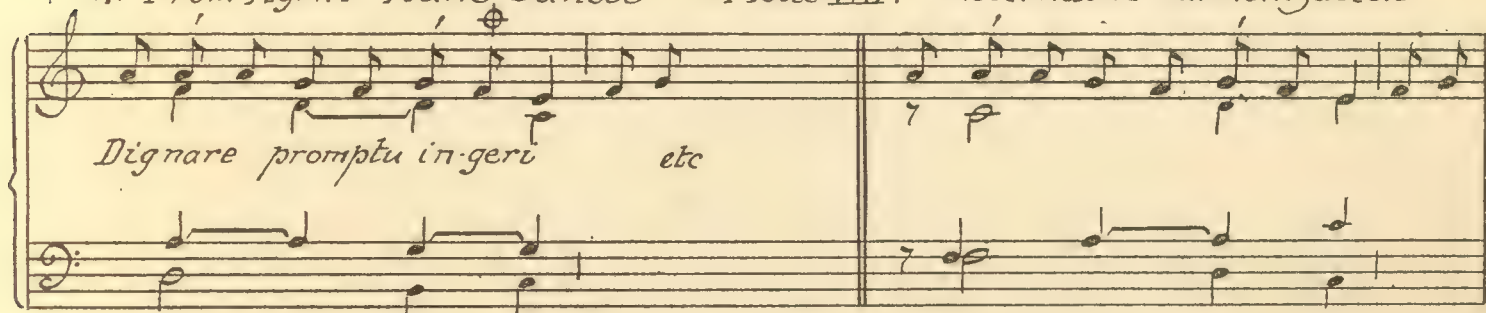




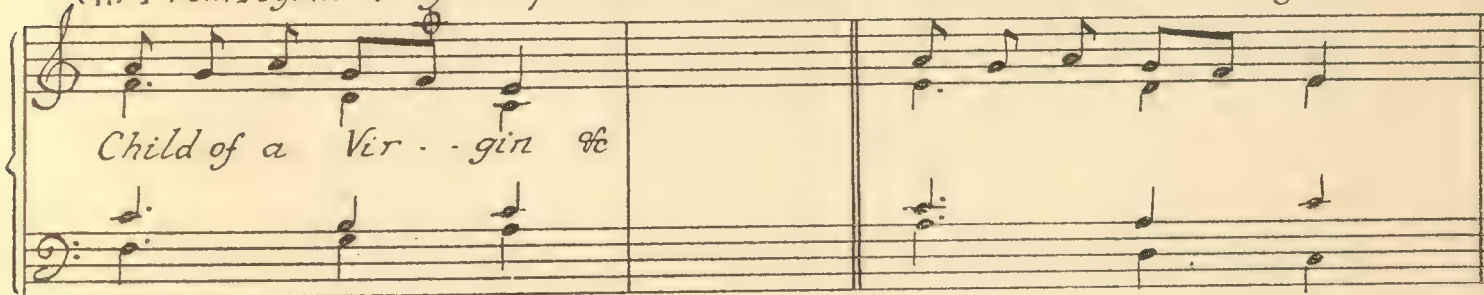
It will be noticed that the feeling of a perfect cadence is avoided (see the chord in brackets) and the transitional effect of the seventh is minimized. But even here the seventh is an unessential passing note, and thus the chord of the dominant seventh can be ruled out as unnecessary.

The following examples are such as might frequently be heard. They show the discord in its least objectionable form, for the seventh occurs either on a weak part of a word or chord, and being *lightly* sung, would scarcely be felt. But again its use is unnecessary, as the alternate harmonizations show.

i) From Hymn "Nunc Sancte" — Mode VIII. *Alternative harmonization*



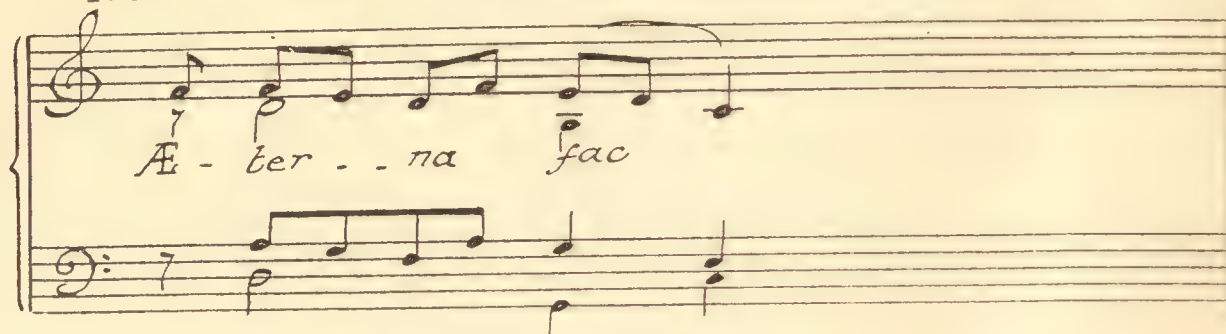
ii) From Hymn "Virginis proles" — Mode I *Alternative harmonization*



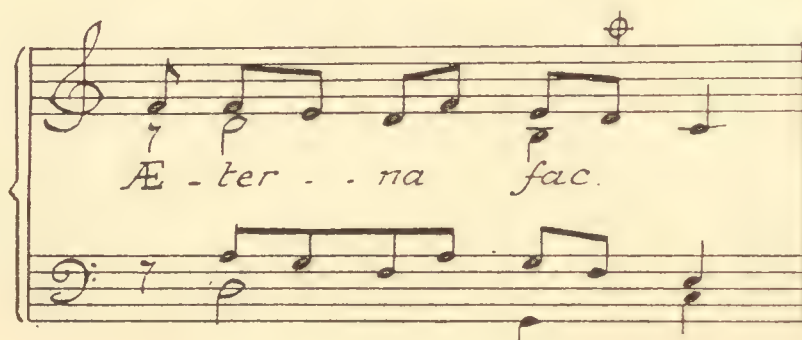
It may be considered with some show of reason that the use of the dominant seventh is not really called for in the accompaniment of Plainchant, and that it creates a feeling contrary, more or less, to the atmosphere of Plainchant.

Whether its use is admitted or not in such cases as the above is a matter of taste, but the following example distinctly shows the mind of one who is recognized as an authority and whose experience is unique.

*From "Te Deum" Mode III. (Harmonization by Sir R.R. Terry.)*



Note how in this typical phrase the dominant seventh is not even used as a passing note in an inner part nor on the weak part of the beat, as shown in the following version:



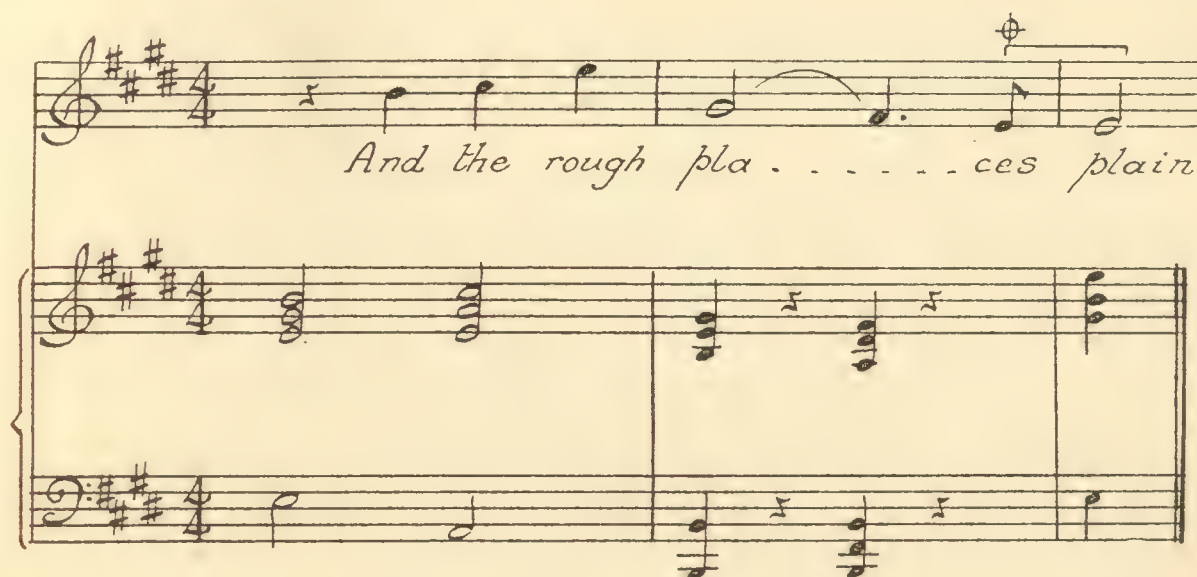


## Chapter IX

Further Considerations: Anticipations; Pedal Point; Consecutive Fifths;  
The Use of the Flattened Seventh Degree.

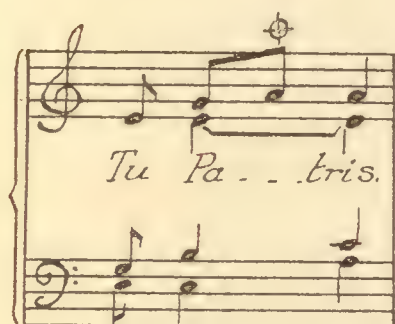
### ANTICIPATIONS

The following quotation from 'Every Valley' (Handel) will make clear what is meant by an 'anticipation':



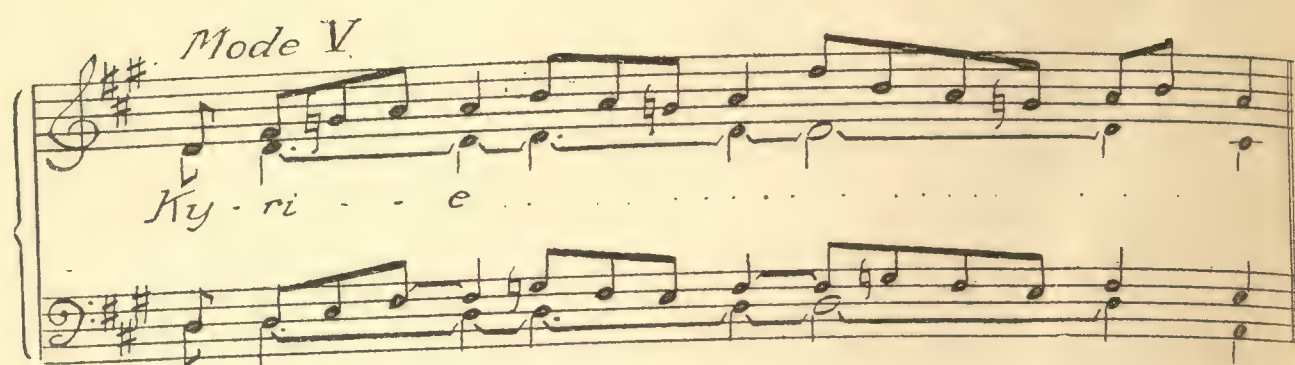
The note ⊕ on the syllable 'ces' anticipates the final note on the word 'plain.' The anticipatory note is discordant with the prevailing harmony.

This kind of procedure is of very frequent occurrence in the accompaniment of Plainchant.

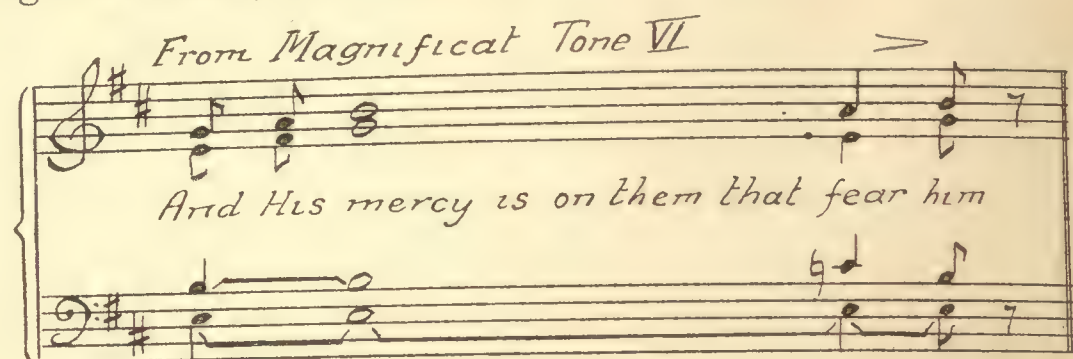


### PEDAL POINT

A pedal point—a sustaining note usually in the bass, over which the melody and inner parts move—is often very effective in Plainchant accompaniment. The following is an excellent example taken from Sir R. R. Terry's admirable accompaniment of the 'Missa de Angelis' [J. W. Chester].



The following is an example of a pedal of shorter duration.



### CONSECUTIVE FIFTHS

Dr. E. H. Fellowes, in his book *The English Madrigal Composers*,<sup>1</sup> provides illuminating observations concerning the practice of the English madrigalists with regard to Consecutive Fifths. As this monumental work should be in the library of every musician, it is suggested that reference should be made to pages 116-120 therein. By permission we quote the following remarks from Dr. Fellowes' book:—

'Throughout the whole history of modern music, as dating from 1600, the use of such a progression [consecutive fifths] has been regarded in academic circles as an error of the first class, standing on the same level as a false quantity in Latin verses.

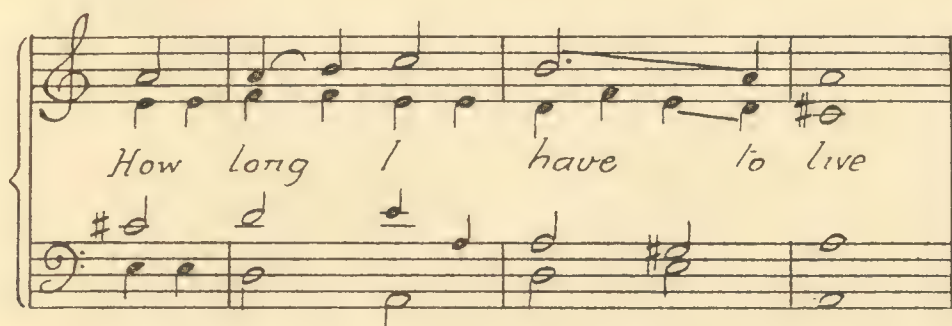
'There is no doubt as to the educational value for students of a training which enforces the strictest observance of definite and reasonable rules of grammar, nor is there any doubt that all the greatest music of the Classical Period was composed with a universal recognition of the rule that consecutive fifths and octaves were to be absolutely excluded; and it is a fact that scarcely any instances of such progressions can be quoted from the whole of the works of such composers as Bach, Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Beethoven, and Brahms. Not only so, but kindred rules dealing with "hidden fifths" and other such matters, grew to be respected with almost equal strictness. But in modern days composers are throwing such rules to the winds, and it cannot be denied that objection to these forbidden progressions is often based on no more than academic affectation, and not on purely æsthetic grounds. But it is sometimes forgotten that the rule about fifths was being deliberately disregarded by several prominent musicians in Italy as well as in England at the close of the sixteenth century; and the fact that the world's greatest musicians in the period roughly

<sup>1</sup> Published by Clarendon Press.

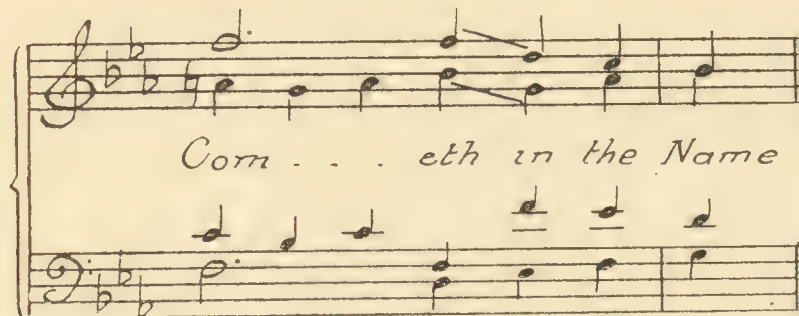


lying between 1560 and 1900 observed it strictly, does not necessarily establish it for all time. It is sometimes forgotten also that the earliest kind of harmonized music took the form of singing a piece of music right through in consecutive fifths. 'In connexion with this subject the practice of the English madrigalists is full of interest. Direct pairs of fifths seldom occur in the writings of the majority of these composers, and practically never in those of Byrd, Morley, Wilbye, and Weelkes; but such a composer as Farnaby seems to have felt no great objection to them, and the large number of such progressions in his Canzonets cannot possibly be explained on the grounds of negligence or incompetence. It is clear that he deliberately disregarded the rule.'

Nowadays the use of consecutive fifths has become quite as general as that of any other harmonic effect which may suit a composer's purpose. Even Dr. Greene (d. 1755) did not fear to let such fifths pass; witness the following extract from his anthem 'Lord, let me know mine end.'



The following shows an occasional 'pair' occurring in Dr. Macpherson's 'Communion Service in E flat.' The present organist of St. Paul's Cathedral is careful to mark these fifths in the printed copy—no doubt to inform everybody that he is aware of them.



It is impossible to state definitely when such occasional fifths may be used with advantage. Parallel fifths between the bass and the part immediately above it are undoubtedly more noticeable than when between any two upper parts. The great masters avoided such fifths as a rule; no doubt, wide experience taught them, and every musician knows that a promiscuous use of consecutive fifths is not to be advocated. The above examples serve to show, however, that judgment and common sense need only be used to prevent inartistic consequences.

Passages largely consisting of consecutive fifths such as the following extract shows, are no doubt intended for a special purpose; they occur frequently to-day in works of our most gifted composers.

*From Carol Anthem "Here is the little door" — Herbert Howells*

But ho-ly slum - - ber holds with ass and sheep

The effect of the above passage is very charming, and no doubt few would disagree with that verdict.

From a reasonable point of view, a modern musician can make use of consecutive fifths in Plainchant accompaniment as deliberately as Farnaby may have done in his Canzonets. Generally there is a very evident reason, although at times such a procedure may be entirely a matter of æsthetics.

The following shows a most useful and charming form of cadence.

*(a) Mode V.* *(b)*

Et cus-to - di - at ci - vi - ta - tem. civ-i - ta - tem.

Compare (a) with the other form of cadence (b). How weak is the latter! The appearance of the flattened seventh at  $\oplus$  creates the dominant seventh effect previously commented upon, while the repetition of the same chord on the two last syllables is tame. Observe too, that the flattened seventh in the cadence of (a) being delayed, not only avoids the 'modern' dominant seventh effect, but also creates a 4-3 suspension, lending stress to the accented syllable 'ta,' making a stronger cadence.

The following instance does not give cause for adverse comment: it is reasonably justifiable:

*III. 2.*

And to be the glory of thy peo - - ple Is - - ra - el.



Nor does the following example offend the ear. The effect is good, the accompaniment being sustained in subdued fashion and by a different medium from the voice part.

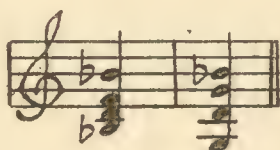
*Tone VIII. 1.*

*Praise the Lord O Je-ru-sa--lem, Praise thy God O Zi--on.*

The difference of *medium* between melody and accompaniment should clearly be borne in mind at all times; but especially in the treatment of Plainchant where, assisted by the subdued character of the accompaniment, such examples as the above are both legitimate and artistic.

### THE USE OF THE FLATTENED SEVENTH DEGREE

As has already been mentioned, there frequently appears in Plainchant melodies the flattened seventh degree (which in the natural scale is B flat). The presence of this flattened seventh needs careful treatment in harmonization. At once the following chords suggest themselves:



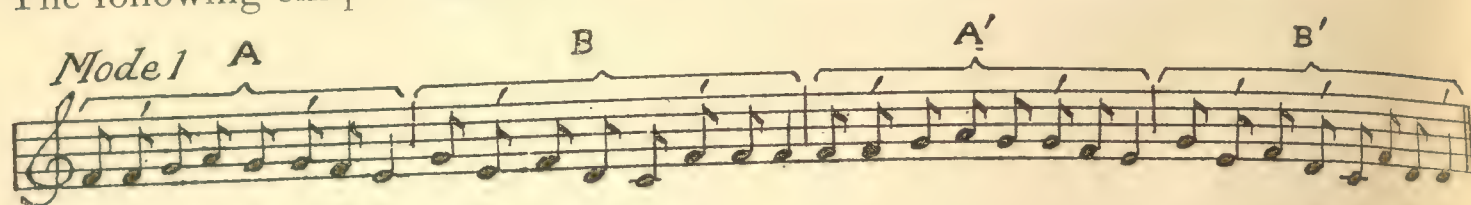
For obvious reasons the B flat must not be harmonized by a chord containing E flat (because B is the only modal degree capable of inflection). There are many melodies in which the B flat does not occur; yet in their harmonization the chords associated with B flat as above are both available and desirable. But *when* to use the B flat chords in such cases seems a widely felt difficulty: for, as will be shown, there are times when the accompanying harmony may equally well include either B natural or B flat.

The following observations and comparisons may help to solve this difficulty:

Just as in (say) a modern hymn-tune each phrase moves towards a certain chord or key, the successive cadences being varied, so in Plainchant the melodic line progresses towards certain notes at cadence points, which generally vary phrase by phrase, showing that in the minds of those who composed them was feeling for form, variety, and balance.



The following simple Plainchant melody bears out the above remarks.



Consider the harmonization of the above.

- (1) The phrase A progresses towards the note Me (E) suggesting C major, A minor, or E minor chords. If C major is here used, it should not be used later at the cadence of A<sup>1</sup>, but the A minor or E minor chords.
- (2) The phrase B suggests F major as the cadence chord, which allows and undoubtedly calls for the use of B flat.
- (3) The phrase B<sup>1</sup> naturally progresses towards the Final of the Mode, Ray (D), and will be harmonized by D minor chord, which suggests that the phrase admits of the use of the B flat chords. Thus:

A B A' B'

In phrase B the B flat chord is strongly implied, and its use is legitimately grounded. In phrase B<sup>1</sup> the use of B flat where shown in brackets ( ) is quite optional. The B natural in these chords is termed the Dorian Sixth (being the sixth degree of the Dorian Mode), and is very characteristic of the mode; but the use of B flat as indicated by the brackets is a rather 'softer' effect, and is quite in order to those who prefer it. Nevertheless, a too frequent use of the B flat chords tends to obliterate the characteristic atmosphere of the mode.

Let the following melody be considered in similar fashion to the preceding one. Suggestive notes are given concerning the method of harmonization.

Mode 1. Towards D minor chord feeling; B flat chords optional. Towards A minor - also B natural present in melody - avoid B flat chords.

Te Jo - - seph cele - brent agmina Caeli - zum, Te Cuncti resonant Christi - adum chori;

Towards C major - avoid B flat chords. Towards D minor - B flat chords optional.

Qui cla - rus meri - tis, junctus es in cly - tae, Casto foe - de - re Vir - gi - ni.

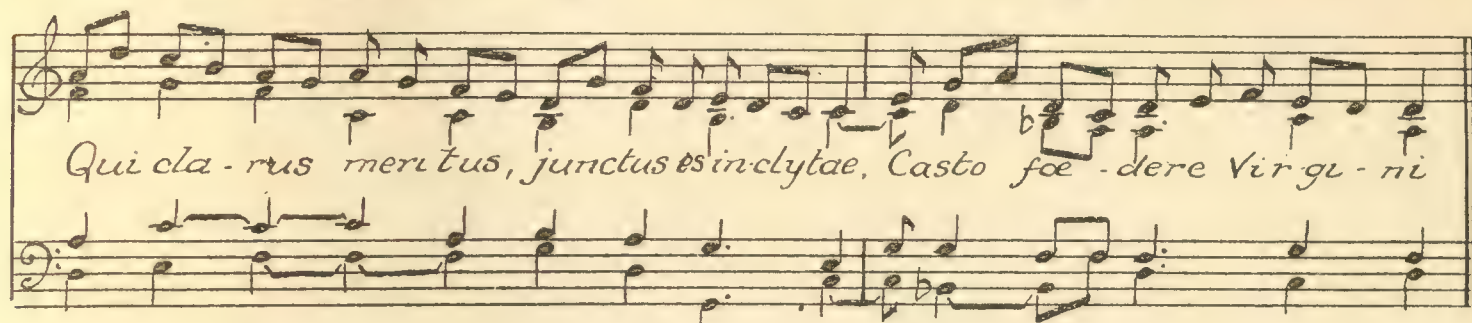


Harmonized simply, it appears:

C.W.P.



Te Jo - - seph celebrent agmina Cæli-tum, Te Cuncti resonent Christi adum chori;



Qui cla - rus meri-tus, junctus es in-clytae, Casto fœ - dere Vir-gi - ni

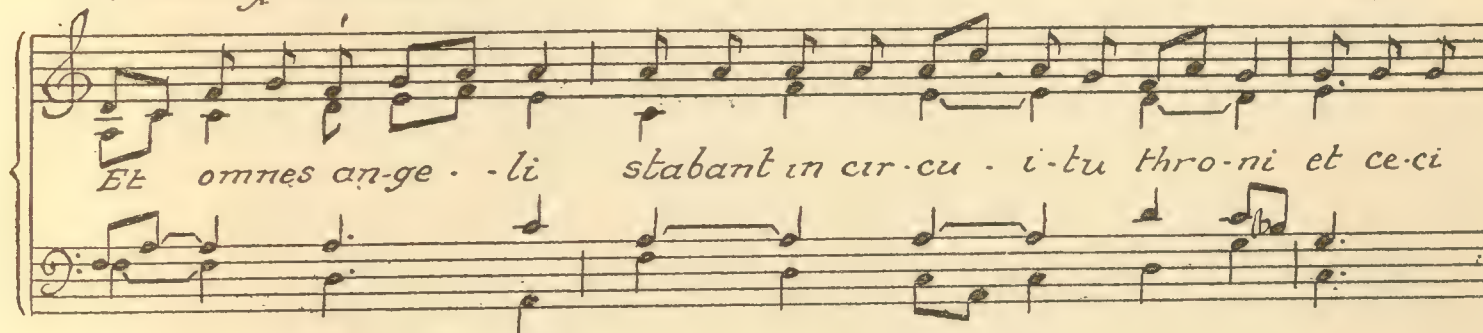
The above example exhibits both variety of cadences and balance of phrase: its melodic contour shows sweeping curves with subtle varying of stress; no two successive stresses occurring at the same pitch. This should be sufficient to refute the cry that these Plainsong melodies are dull.

\* \* \*

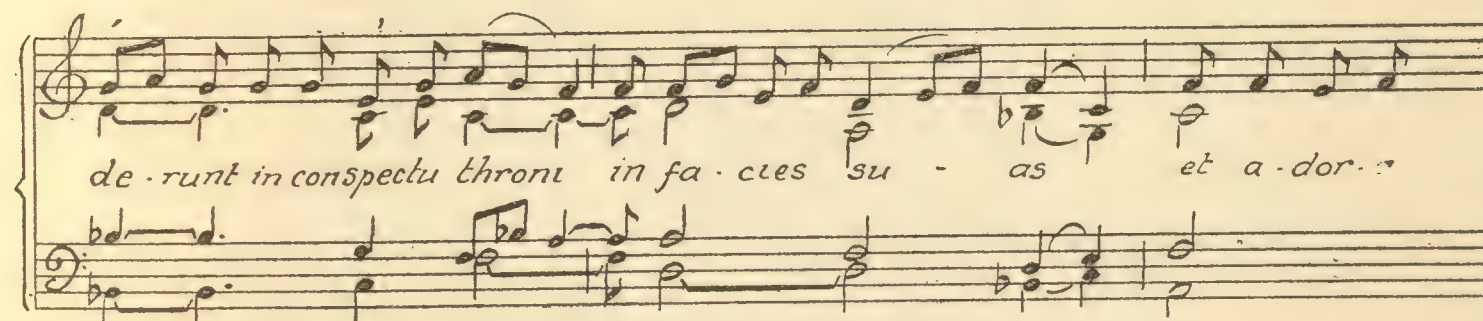
Eight melodies are now given with simple harmonization to illustrate each mode. By their assistance the student should endeavour to harmonize others.

*Melody in Mode 1.*

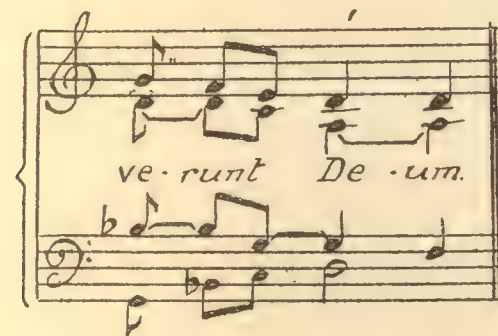
G.O.



Et omnes an - ge - - li stabant in cir - cu - i - tu thro - ni et ce - ci



de - runt in conspectu throni in fa - cies su - as et a - dor -



ve - runt De - um.



*Melody in Mode II (transposed)*

C W P.

*Now that the daylight fills the sky We lift our hearts to God... on high, That He*

*in all we do or say... would keep us free from harm to-day.*

*Melody in Mode III*

*Quarentes e-um te-né-re temu erunt tur... lam*

*quia sicut prophe--tam e--um ha-be-bant*

*Melody in Mode IV (transposed)*

*Maker of all things God of Love, Our Ruler, hear us from a-bove*



From harmful slumber set us free Lest steepd in sloth thy servants be.

*Melody in Mode V (transposed)*

C.W.P.

Ex-ul - - tarit Spiritus me - - us. in De - - o salu - - tar - i me-o

*Melody in Mode VI (transposed)*

C.W.P.

Cruci - fixus sur-rexit a mor - tu - - - us - , et

re - - - - demit nos Al-le - - - lu - - - - ia, Al-le - - lu - - - ia

*Melody in Mode VII (transposed.)*

The Lamb's high banquet we a-wait In snow-white robes of roy - - al state

*The Accompaniment of Plainchant*

*And now, the Red Sea's chan-nel past To Christ our King We sing at last*

*Melody in Mode VIII. (transposed)*

*To Thee before the close of day Creator of the world we pray*

*That with thy wonted favour, thou Wouldst be our guard and keeper now*



## Chapter X

### Observations regarding Psalmody, Illustrations (from Students' Work) of the Tones, Faux-bourdon.

When the student is able to harmonize simple melodies in the various modes, the treatment of the Psalm Tones should present little difficulty.

The following illustrations of the various tones are taken from students' work and thus represent, more or less, the type of error likely to occur. In certain cases, criticism is offered; in others, an alternative treatment only is given for comparison, without reference to any particular point.

It has not been thought necessary to give harmonizations of all the varied endings of the several Tones; the student by this time should be able to accompany any ending with appropriate chords.

Let the student always bear in mind the four points mentioned on page 27. Do not attempt picturesque accompaniment of the Psalms—it is opposed to the spirit of Plainchant.

The recitation should, as far as possible, be supported by root-position chords, for these are reposeful: first inversions are less reposeful. Naturally, harmonic change should coincide with verbal importance, but it should be remembered that the stressing of syllables is the concern of the voices and not of the instrumental accompaniment.

Tone I. Ps. cxviii v. 3. I 5.

The Lord declared his salvation - His righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen....

Compare:—

The last four notes should be rendered with slight ritard and diminuendo.

At the half-verse there should be silence for a short space of time—sufficiently long to take breath comfortably—and the last note should be short and quiet. A similar





*Tone III* *alternative III. 2.*

*For mine eyes have seen Thy sal-va-tion. Thy sal-va-tion.*

The pedal effect at the opening phrase is good.

The change of chord at 'sal' is not essential.

The  $\frac{98}{43}$  at the cadence is anti-modal.

Compare the alternative version. Note the consecutive fifths.

*And to be the glory of thy peo-ple Is-ra-el. - peo-ple Is-ra-el.*

The note on the syllable 'ra' in Israel should be treated as an anticipatory note as shown in the alternative.

*Tone IV. Ps. XL/ v. 5.*

*Mine enemies speak e-vil of me When shall he die and his name per-ish.*

The harmonic changes do not coincide with the verbal accentuation. Note the tritone at the word 'name.' Compare.

*Mine enemies speak e-vil of me When shall he die and his name per-ish.*

Tone V (transposed.) V. 3

He re-mem-bering {his mercy hath holpen his servant} Is-ra-el, {As he promised to our forefathers,} Abraham and his Seed for e-ver.

The first half is good. Note the cadence chords at 'Israel,' which are a characteristic of this mode. Compare the following second half verse.

As he promised . . . ., Abraham . . ., seed for ev-er

The first chord might well be sustained as far as the word 'seed.'

Ps. xcvi. v 6 (b)

The heavens declare his righteousness etc.

The above first half verse cadence is not good: avoid it. In the previous example the intonation of the fifth tone is shown, clearing indicating D major harmony for the recitation—bearing this in mind, the use of the G natural harmony as shown at (b) is more in keeping. If the recitation is supported by D major chord, there will be no temptation to use the E major chord at the cadence. It is possible, of course, to employ other harmony as follows, but the above at (b) is the more characteristic.

The heavens declare his righteousness etc.



Tone VI

He hath shewed strength with his arm He hath scattered the proud in the nation of their hearts: the image

The unison effect is good, and should not be overlooked.

The second inversion at the word 'proud' creates a feeling of suspense, and is better avoided. The cadence is not good—the use of the first inversion of the diminished triad is not commended nor the final first inversion. The sixth tone being to all intents the same as the modern major scale, there is a temptation to stimulate interest: to get variety which may lead to such as the following:

As he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed for e-ver.

Tone VII Ps. CXIX. v73

VII 3

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy Commandments

Compare :-

Thy hands have made

*Ps CXLiii. v. 9*

*Deliver me O Lord, from mine enemies*      *For I flee unto thee to hide me.*

The ending of the above is good considered from the view of coincidence of verbal accent and chord change. The word 'me' does not require a change of chord, but the following is quite acceptable and perhaps better than the above, if it is remembered that the accompaniment is merely a subdued one, acting as background.

*Tone VIII.* *VIII. 2*

*My soul doth magnify the Lord*      *And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

The opening, though having the right intention, is a little heavy: there is no need for change of chord at 'soul,' and the following is quite satisfactory and avoids fussiness.

*etc*



The following harmonization of the second half of the verse shows the idea of 'stimulating the interest'; it does not need comment.

A musical score for a two-part setting. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature. The lyrics are written between the staves: "And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." The melody is simple, with the tenor part (bottom staff) providing a harmonic accompaniment to the plainchant (top staff).

### FAUX-BOURDON TREATMENT

The following is an example of Faux-bourdon treatment by Tallis. The Plainchant melody was usually placed in the tenor and harmonized for unaccompanied voices in pure part writing. The harmonies are peculiar to the Tudor period and are beautiful, but should not be imitated as suitable instrumental accompaniment of Plainsong.

A musical score for a two-part setting. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature. The lyrics are written between the staves: "For be-hold from hence forth All generations shall call me bless-ed." The melody is simple, with the tenor part (bottom staff) providing a harmonic accompaniment to the plainchant (top staff). The title "Fauxbourdon by Tallis." is written above the top staff.

## Chapter XI

'Giving out' the Intonation, Boys' Voices, Men's Voices, Study of Neumatic Melodies, Antiphons, The Power of the Organ in Accompaniment, Congregational Hymn Singing, Final Word.

### 'GIVING-OUT' THE INTONATION

How often one hears the intonation 'boomed out' on the pedals! The impropriety of such a practice is obvious when the purpose of giving-out the intonation is borne in mind. It is intended only for the ear of the cantor, giving him the pitch and announcing the tone.

One or two quiet eight-foot stops will suffice, besides being more artistic (because more suitable) and less disturbing than the pedal performance.

### BOYS' VOICES

It has been said that chanting the Psalms to Plainsong Tones confines boys' voices to the lower and weaker part of their compass. This has even been stated as a difficulty militating against the use of Plainsong. Surely it should be regarded as a means of developing the so-called weaker part of boys' voices; nor should there be any danger of the rough 'chesty' tone being employed if the voices are being carefully trained.

### MEN'S VOICES

There is a difference between chanting and singing. Chanting never calls for the full vigour and sonority of the voice as singing does; and this fact seems seldom realized or appreciated. What is commonly understood as 'chest' tone, has no place in the art of chanting; perhaps occasionally for special stress this reedy tone may 'come through' the 'covered' tone of the chanting voice.

By using the 'covered' or 'head' tone a delightfully flexible rendering of Plainchant is acquired, free from the unmalleableness and monotony which characterizes Plainchant when '*sung*.' Moreover, there is no temptation to yield to a dramatic treatment of the Psalms.

Chanting does not tire the voice; but in spite of this, good chanting by men's voices is rarely heard. Often it is regarded rather as a nuisance, and not worthy of serious attention; whereas to those who approach it aright, it has a peculiar charm.

### THE STUDY OF NEUMATIC MELODIES

Those students who are desirous of extending their knowledge by studying neumatic melodies are advised to study *The Grammar of Plainsong*,<sup>1</sup> giving special attention to rhythm. Further, to examine such a book as <sup>2</sup>*Cantus Officiorum*, which contains melodies in abundance.

<sup>1</sup> '*Grammar of Plainsong*,' by the Stanbrook Benedictines, published by Burns & Oates Ltd.

<sup>2</sup> Published under the direction of the Benedictines of Solesmes, obtainable at Burns & Oates Ltd.

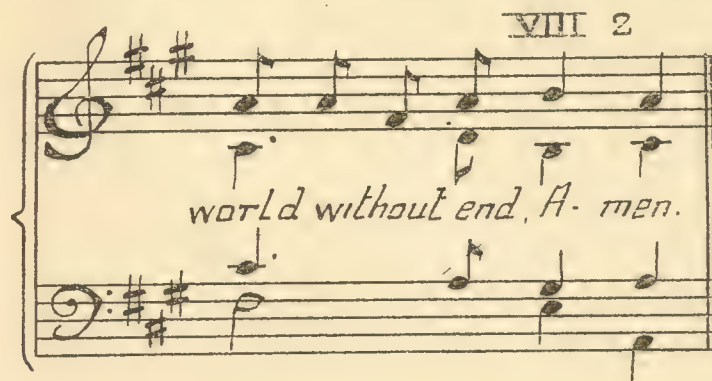


## ANTIPHONS

Traditionally, each Psalm has its antiphon, which is sung before and after the Psalm. The antiphon *always* ends on the Final of the mode in which the Psalm tone is written; therefore, although the Psalm-tone may have an ending, the last note of which is *not* the Final of the Mode, yet the repetition of the antiphon (after the Psalm) brings the whole to a proper tonal conclusion.

In the Anglican Church, however, the Psalms are generally performed without the antiphon. Therefore, if the ending of the Psalm-tone has not the Final of the mode for its last note, a phrase or two should be added on the organ making a suitable conclusion.

For example, the ending of the 'Gloria' Eighth-tone (second ending), is :



It ends not on the Final of the mode, which is E (Soh), but on Doh, and the organ might continue for a phrase or two leading to an appropriate close on the Final of the mode. Thus:



## THE POWER OF THE ORGAN IN ACCOMPANIMENT

In Plainchant, the melody is really the one and only thing: for it was conceived as melody without any accompaniment whatsoever. Modern ears generally demand an accompaniment, which should be unobtrusive in character, as it were a 'ghost' of an accompaniment, not even *balancing* in tone-quantity the voices, as balance is usually regarded; but quite subdued and of neutral tint. If the Psalms are chanted by men and boys alternately verse by verse, the men's verses may be accompanied on, say, Great Clarabella coupled to Swell soft diapason and 4 ft. harmonic flute with a quiet pedal; while the boys' verse might have the swell organ only, without pedals for contrast. At least some such quiet combinations as suit the acoustical properties of the church. In accompanying hymns in which a congregation really takes part, a heavier accompaniment seems called for, but even in these cases it should not be such as is usually employed in accompanying a modern hymn tune.

Congregations need to be taught how to render Plainchant hymn melodies, if their musical beauty is to be preserved. In churches where these melodies are sung, it is an important part of the organist's work to endeavour to achieve reasonably good hymn renderings by the congregation.

#### A FINAL WORD

Plainchant *ideally* presented, is uniquely expressive and decorous. Students, especially church musicians, should take every opportunity of hearing it chanted and accompanied in perfect style. Such opportunity has in the past been offered at Westminster Cathedral (under Sir Richard Terry's direction), and at the Church of the Cowley Fathers, at Oxford. Too many are acquainted only with a *travesty* of Plainchant, and to such the real thing must come as a revelation.

If this book arouses interest in any degree in the cause of Plainchant, it will not have been written in vain.

FINIS.



## APPENDIX

The following specimens may be of interest as showing the treatment of several Plainchant melodies by musicians of note during the last hundred years.

The harmonizations by Sullivan show what he did at sixteen years of age. In the year 1858 (the date of publication) Sullivan had been for four years a chorister of the Chapel Royal, St. James's.

Obviously these examples do not call for comment, and the purpose of their inclusion in this book is quite evident.

From *Gregorian Mass for the Dead*. Mr. S. Wesley's arrangement, with organ accompaniment by V. Novello (circa 1820).

## 1st. Tone. Sequence.

Di - es I - - rae di - es il - - la sol - vet sæ - .clum

Organ.

in fa - vil - la Tes - te Da - vid cum Sy - bil - la.

From *The Lamentations for the Service at 'Tenebræ.'*<sup>1</sup> Newly harmonized and arranged from the Gregorian Chant by V. Novello, 1829.

*GHIMEL* *Mi-gra-vit Judus propter afflic-ti-o-nem et multi-tu-di-nem*

*ser-vi-tu-tis ha-bi-ta-vit in-ter gentes nec in-ve-nit re-qui-em. Om-nes*

*per-se-cu-to-res e-jus apprehenderunt e-am in-ter an-gus-ti-as.*

<sup>1</sup> Accompaniment only intended for private performance, as the organ is never used at the service of Tenebræ.



From *The Whole Book of Psalms*. With the canticles and hymns of the Church.  
Set to appropriate chants for four voices. John Hullah, 1844.  
(Printed on four staves with the proper clefs.)

9th. Tone (Peregrinus.)

Blessed be the Lord. . . . God of Israel, For He hath visited and re-deemed His people.

3rd Tone Ist ending. Ps. CXXXV.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious And His mercy endureth for ever.

From the Rev. Thomas Helmore's *Accompanying Harmonies to the Hymnal Noted*,  
published for the Ecclesiological Society by J. Alfred Novello, 1858.

*Magnæ Deus Potentiæ*. Arthur Seymour Sullivan.

Magna De-us po-ten-ti-æ Qui ex a-quis or-tum ge-nus

Partim re-mittis gur-gu-ti Partim le-vas in æ-e-ra A-men.

*Jam Christus astra ascenderat.* Arthur Seymour Sullivan.

*Jam Christum as-tra as-cen-der-at Re-gres-sus un-de-ven-er-at*

This system shows the first two measures of the piece. The treble staff has a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The melody is written in a plainchant style with various note values and rests. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

*Promis-sum Pa-tris... mu-ne... re...*

This system contains the next two measures. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, and the musical notation includes various note values and rests.

*Sanctum da-tu... rus Spi-ri-tum A-men...*

This system contains the final two measures of the piece. The melody and accompaniment conclude with a final cadence. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, and the musical notation includes various note values and rests.

From *The Psalter and Canticles with Appropriate Chants, Ancient and Modern.* James Turle, 1866.

(From the Preface.) Series No. 1 consists of the Ancient Chants of the Church. These, it is hoped, are presented in the purest form, both as to text and accent, that has yet appeared in this country. They may be sung either in unison, with the short score as an organ accompaniment, or in harmony, the parts of which have been made as vocal as possible.

Tone IV. 2nd ending Ps. 119

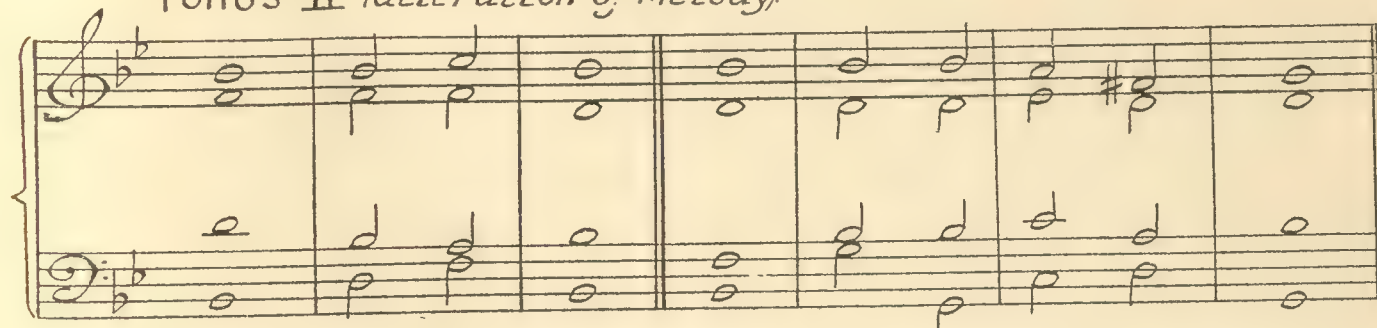
*My soul cleaveth to the dust Quickenthou me ac-cording to Thy Word.*

This system shows the 2nd ending of Psalm 119, Tone IV. The treble staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The melody is written in a plainchant style with various note values and rests. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

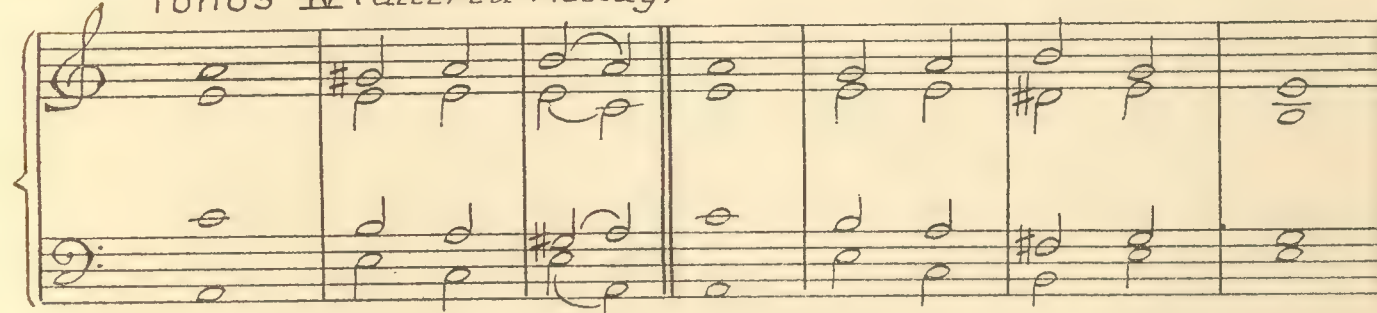


From *A Psalter containing a Selection of Psalm Tunes, Chants, Services, and other Ecclesiastical Music*. By Rev. Wm. J. E. Bennett, M.A., Incumbent of St. Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, assisted by Robert Carter, organist of the same church, 1844.

*Tonus II (alteration of melody)*



*Tonus IV (altered melody)*



*Tonus V. 2nd. ending. (altered melody and accentuation.)*





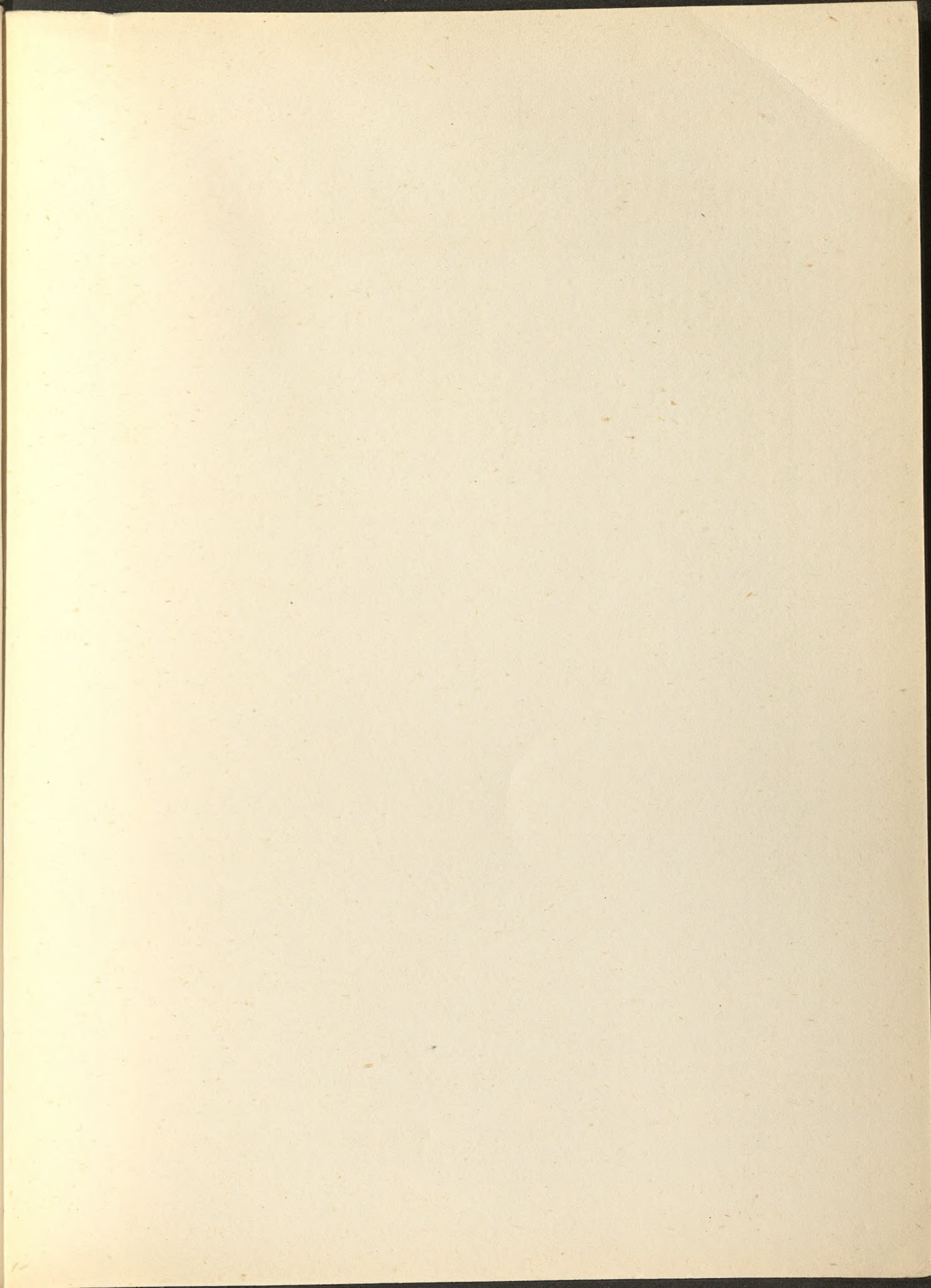














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